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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

CONFERENCE

Guide on conduct of Plenary Meetings

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I. Powers of the Chairperson

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Powers and duties of Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference

The Chairperson is responsible for the conduct of the meetings and adherence to Rules. He grants the right to speak, puts questions to the Conference, and announces decisions taken.

The Chairperson has complete control over the proceedings and makes decisions on points of order.

The Chairperson may propose:

- a time limit for speakers,
- to limit the number of times a delegate may intervene on any question,
- the closure of list of speakers,
- the suspension or adjournment of the meeting,
- the adjournment or closure of debate.

The Conference may limit the time allowed to each speaker and the number of times a delegate may intervene on any question. When such a limitation has been agreed and a speaker has spoken his allotted time, the Chairperson shall call him to order.

When the Conference has agreed to one of the above proposals, it is the responsibility of the Chairperson to see that it is strictly observed, in particular that a speaker does not exceed the allotted time.

GRO IX.1: In addition to exercising such powers as are conferred upon him elsewhere by these Rules, the Chairperson shall declare the opening and closing of each plenary meeting of the session. He shall direct the discussions in plenary meetings, and at such meetings ensure observance of these Rules, accord the right to speak, put questions and announce decisions. He shall rule on points of order and, subject to these Rules, shall have complete control over the proceedings at any meetings. He may, in the course of the discussion of an item, propose to the Conference the limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers, the number of times each delegation may speak on any question, the closure of the list of speakers, the suspension or adjournment of the meeting, or the adjournment or closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

GRO XII.19: The Conference or Council may limit the time to be allowed to each speaker and the number of times any delegate or representative may speak on any question. When debate is limited and a delegate or representative has spoken his allotted time, the Chairperson shall call him to order without delay.

Decorum in debate

All remarks should be addressed to the Chairperson and not to individual delegates.

The speaker must confine himself to the question under discussion, and avoid personalities. If the Chairperson considers that the speaker's remarks are improper, i.e. remarks of a personal character or which attack the good name of an individual, government or nation, the Chairperson will intervene and call the speaker to order.

Right of reply

While there is no specific Rule of the General Rules of the Organization regarding the right of reply, the Conference at its Twelfth Session decided to adopt the procedure in use in the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Under this procedure, where a delegate wishes to reply to criticism of his government's policy, he should preferably do so on the evening of the day on which such criticism has been voiced, after all those wishing to participate in the discussion have had an opportunity to do so.

At the end of the afternoon meeting the Chairperson would accordingly announce: "This concludes our business for the day, but before adjourning the meeting I shall give the floor to the delegate of ... who has asked to exercise the right of reply."

*Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts****Challenging Chairperson's ruling***

If a decision of the Chairperson on matters of procedure or similar questions, is challenged by a delegation who does not accept his ruling, the Chairperson asks the delegate whether he wishes to submit an alternative proposal. In the affirmative the proposal has to be seconded. It is then put to the vote. If it obtains a majority of the votes cast it is adopted. If it is rejected, the Chairperson's ruling stands. (See also *Points of Order*, on page 9).

The Chairperson should always state very clearly what the issue is and make sure it is fully understood.

In case of difficulty in that respect, it may be useful to ask the Secretary to explain the matter.

GRO IX.4: The Chairperson, in the exercise of his functions, remains under the authority of the Conference.

Vice-Chairperson

Vice-Chairperson

The Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson has no vote when in the Chair. Another member of his delegation votes in his place.

GRO IX.2: In the absence of the Chairperson during a plenary meeting or any part thereof, one of the Vice-Chairpersons shall preside. A Vice-Chairperson acting as Chairperson shall have the same powers and duties as the Chairperson.

GRO IX.3: The Chairperson, or a Vice-Chairperson acting as Chairperson, shall not vote but may appoint an alternate, associate or adviser from his delegation to vote in his place.

II. Member Organizations

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Participation in meetings and declarations of competence and voting rights

A Member Organization has in general the right to participate in any meeting of the Organization in which any of its Member States are entitled to participate. However, a Member Organization is not entitled to participate in the General Committee of the Conference, the Credentials Committee, or any other body of the Conference dealing with the internal working of the Conference as the Conference may decide.

The Member Organization or its Member States is required to indicate, before any meeting of the Organization, which, as between the Member Organization and its Member States, has competence in respect of any specific question to be considered in the meeting and which, as between the Member Organization and its Member States, will exercise the right to vote in respect of each particular agenda item. (see also *Voting rights of Members and Associate Members*, on page 15)

Where an agenda item includes both matters in respect of which competence had been transferred to a Member Organization and matters in respect of which competence remained with its Member States, both the Member Organization and its Member States may participate in the discussions. In such cases, only the views expressed by the party which has the right to vote shall be taken into account by the meeting in arriving at its decision. Where the views of the party not having the voting rights are reflected in the report, the fact that they are the views of the party not having the voting rights must also be reflected in the report. Before formally opening the meeting, the Chairperson should draw the attention of the meeting to the declarations of competence and voting rights provided by the Member Organization or its Member States under Rule XLII.2.

Art. II.9: Except as otherwise provided in this Article, a Member Organization shall have the right to participate in matters within its competence in any meeting of the Organization, including any meeting of the Council or other body, other than bodies of restricted membership referred to below, in which any of its Member States are entitled to participate. A Member Organization shall not be eligible for election or designation to any such body, nor shall it be eligible for election or designation to any body established jointly with other organizations. A Member Organization shall not have the right to participate in bodies of restricted membership specified in the rules adopted by the Conference.

GRO XLIII.2: Member Organizations shall not participate in the Credentials Committee or the General Committee or any other body of the Conference dealing with the internal working of the Conference as the Conference may decide.

GRO XLII.2: Before any meeting of the Organization the Member Organization or its Member States shall indicate which, as between the Member Organization and its Member States, has competence in respect of any specific question to be considered in the meeting and which, as between the Member Organization and its Member States, shall exercise the right to vote in respect of each particular agenda item.

GRO XLII.3: In cases where an agenda item covers both matters in respect of which competence has been transferred to the Member Organization and matters which lie within the competence of its Member States, both the Member Organization and its Member States may participate in the discussions. In such cases the meeting, in arriving at its decisions, shall take into account only the intervention of the party which has the right to vote.

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

It is open to any Member Nations to request, at any time, a Member Organization or its Member States to provide more detailed information as to which, as between the Member Organization and its Member States, has competence in respect of any question. In such cases the Member Organization or its Member States would be required to furnish the supplementary information.

GRO XLII.1: Any Member Nation of the Organization may request a Member Organization or its Member States to provide information as to which, as between the Member Organization and its Member States, has competence in respect of any specific question. The Member Organization or the Member States concerned shall provide this information on such request.

III. Proposals and Amendments

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Proposals and amendments at meetings of the Conference

Proposals related to items on the agenda are normally dealt with in the commission or committee to which that item has been allocated, except where the item is to be considered in plenary.

Proposals and amendments to proposals shall be handed in writing to the Secretary-General who shall circulate copies to the delegates.

No proposal shall be put to vote unless one full day has elapsed after circulation of the text, except if the meeting decides otherwise. However, the Chairperson may permit voting on amendments to proposals, even though these amendments have not been circulated in advance.

The proposer may withdraw his proposal at any time before the voting commences provided that it has not been amended.

The proposal may be reintroduced by another member.

GRO XI.1: Proposals relating to an item on the agenda shall be introduced in or referred to the commission or committee to which the relevant item has been allocated, except where the item concerned is to be considered at plenary meetings without prior referral to a commission or committee.

GRO XI.2: Proposals and amendments shall be introduced in writing and handed to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who shall arrange for their circulation as Conference documents.

GRO XI.3: Except as may be decided otherwise by the Conference at a plenary meeting or by a commission or committee, proposals shall not be put to the vote unless copies thereof have been circulated at least 24 hours before the vote. The Chairperson of the Conference or of the commission or committee concerned may permit voting on amendments even though these amendments have not been circulated or have been circulated less than 24 hours before the vote.

GRO XI.4: A proposal may be withdrawn at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the proposal has not been amended. A proposal which has thus been withdrawn may be reintroduced by any member.

Voting on proposals and amendments

Parts of a proposal or amendment may be voted on separately. This may be requested by a delegate. But the Chairperson can propose it to the Conference.

Only four delegates may speak on the subject of voting the parts separately; two for and two against.

Voting on parts of a proposal does not eliminate the need for a vote on the whole proposal (except if all parts have been rejected).

GRO XII.18: Parts of a proposal or of an amendment shall be voted on separately if a delegate or representative requests such division, provided that, if objection is made, the question of division shall be decided by the Conference or Council. In addition to the delegate or representative requesting the division, two delegates or two representatives may speak for, and two against, the motion for division. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment which are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal or of the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

*Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts****Reconsideration of proposals***

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| <p>Only two speakers can be given the floor to speak <u>against</u> the reconsideration of a proposal which has already been rejected. It is then put to a vote.</p> | <p>GRO XII.25: When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session unless the Conference or Council so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion, after which it shall be immediately put to the vote.</p> |
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Amendments to proposals

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| <p>This is an important Rule to be considered in conjunction with the two preceding pages. It deals with the order in which separate amendments are voted upon (when more than one is moved) and gives definitions. The Chairperson has to apply - and often interpret it. He should always state his rulings very clearly, without trying to give too elaborate explanations.</p> | <p>GRO XII.26: When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Conference or Council shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be furthest removed in substance from the original proposal, and then on the amendment next removed therefrom, and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another, the latter shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from, or revises part of that proposal, but not if it negatives the proposal. An amendment by way of substitute shall not be voted on until the vote has been taken on the original proposal and any amendments thereto.</p> |
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Competence of Conference or Council

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| <p>The question of the competence of the Conference (or the Council) to adopt a proposal must be settled first, before the substance of the proposal or issue is discussed.</p> | <p>GRO XII.27: Subject to paragraph 26, any motion calling for a decision by the Conference or Council on its competence to adopt a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before a vote is taken on the proposal in question.</p> |
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General consent on a proposal

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| <p>A matter other than an election may be settled without voting, if the Chairperson so proposes. This procedure cannot apply where a two-thirds majority is required. (see <i>Majority requirements</i>, on page 16)</p> | <p>GRO XII.17: If a decision is to be taken on a matter other than an election, for which a two-thirds majority is not required by the Constitution or these Rules, the Chairperson may submit to the Conference or Council that the matter be decided by general consent without recourse to a formal vote.</p> |
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IV. Points of Order

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

A point of order is a question or a request to the Chairperson which covers a matter of procedure. The Chairperson must immediately answer or give a ruling.

In principle, a point of order can only deal with the following matters:

- a) The competence of the Conference to deal with any question;
- b) The procedure being applied or to be adopted;
- c) The application of the Constitution or General Rules of the Organization in regard to the matter under discussion;
- d) The manner in which the debate is conducted;
- e) The maintenance of order;
- f) Information on the matter under discussion;
- g) Material arrangements (seating, interpretation, etc.);
- h) Documents and translations related to the matter under discussion.

A delegate wishing to make a point of order must stand up and raise his country sign. He may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

The Chairperson may rule that the question or request is not a point of order.

A delegate may appeal against any ruling of the Chairperson covering a point of order. Such an appeal shall be immediately put to vote, no-one being permitted to speak.

During voting, delegates may interrupt the voting only on a point of order in connection with the voting.

GRO XII.20: During the discussion of any matter, a delegate or representative may rise to a point of order and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the Chairperson. A delegate or representative may appeal against the ruling of the Chairperson, in which event the appeal shall immediately be put to the vote and the Chairperson's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the votes cast. A delegate or representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

GRO XII.14: Once voting has commenced, no delegate or representative may interrupt the voting except to rise to a point of order in connection with the voting.

V. Suspension, Adjournment or Closure

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Suspension or adjournment of a meeting

A delegate may move suspension or adjournment of the meeting (although the Chairperson may also put it forward). Suspension means a temporary halt in the meeting, the length of the suspension being determined by the Chairperson.

Adjournment means the closure of that meeting, further discussion being postponed until some other time to be determined by the Chairperson.

A proposal to suspend or adjourn the meeting shall be put to vote immediately without debate.

If it is defeated, the same delegate may not move it again at the same meeting, unless the subject under discussion has changed.

GRO XII.21: During the discussion of any matter, a delegate or representative may move the suspension or adjournment of the meeting. Such motion shall not be debated but shall be immediately put to the vote. The Chairperson may limit the time to be allowed to the speaker moving the suspension or adjournment of the meeting. At any meeting the same delegate or representative may not move the suspension or adjournment of the meeting more than once during the discussion of any one matter.

Adjournment or closure of debate

The previous section dealt with meetings. This one deals with debates.

Adjournment of debate means the temporary abandonment of the discussion on a specific subject until a later time, which time is usually included in the motion to adjourn debate. If no time is specified it is assumed to mean adjournment of debate until a later meeting. The Chairperson should make this point clear before commencing the vote on adjournment of debate.

Closure of debate means cessation of all discussions on the specific subject for the rest of the Session.

A delegate may move adjournment or closure of the debate (although the Chairperson may also put it forward).

In the case of adjournment, the Chairperson may not allow more than two delegates to speak in favour, and two against.

In the case of closure, only two delegates can speak against.

The Chairperson must then put the proposal to the vote.

When the debate has been closed in this manner no delegate may reopen the discussion on the substance of the matter.

GRO XII.22: During the discussion of any matter, a delegate or representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two delegates or two representatives may speak for, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. The Chairperson may limit the time allowed to these speakers.

GRO XII.23: A delegate or representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the item under discussion, whether or not any other delegate or representative has signified his wish to speak. Permission to speak on the closure of the debate shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. If the Conference or Council is in favour of the closure, the Chairperson shall declare the closure of the debate. The Chairperson may limit the time allowed to speakers under this paragraph.

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Order of precedence for motions

With regard to suspension, adjournment, closure either of meetings or of debates, if more than one proposal is put forward, the order of precedence is as set out in this Rule.

GRO XII.24: The following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting, except a point of order:

- a) to suspend the meeting;
- b) to adjourn the meeting;
- c) to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion; and
- d) for the closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

VI. Rules on Voting

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Notice periods for voting on certain matters

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment of the Constitution (<u>120 days' notice</u>). | <p>Art. XX.4: No proposal for the amendment of the Constitution shall be included in the agenda of any session of the Conference unless notice thereof has been dispatched by the Director-General to Member Nations and Associate Members at least 120 days before the opening of the session.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension of Rules adopted by the Conference (<u>24 hours' notice</u>). | <p>GRO XLIX.1: Subject to the provisions of the Constitution, any of the foregoing Rules may be suspended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at any plenary meeting of the Conference, provided that notice of the intention to propose the suspension has been communicated to the delegates not less than 24 hours before the meeting at which the proposal is to be made.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment of Rules adopted by the Conference (<u>24 hours' notice</u>). | <p>GRO XLIX.2: Amendments of, or additions to, these Rules may be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at any plenary meeting of the Conference, provided that the intention to propose the amendment or addition has been communicated to the delegates not less than 24 hours before the meeting at which the proposal is to be considered, and provided further that the Conference has received and considered a report on the proposal by an appropriate committee.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment of Financial Regulations (<u>24 hours' notice</u>). | <p>Fin. Reg. 15.2: These (Financial) Regulations may be amended by the Conference in the same manner as provided for amendments of the General Rules of the Organization (see Rule XLIX).</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals and amendments for plenary meetings (normally must be circulated one day before discussion or vote). | <p>GRO XI.2: Proposals and amendments shall be introduced in writing and handed to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who shall arrange for their circulation as Conference documents.</p> <p>GRO XI.3: Except as may be decided otherwise by the Conference at a plenary meeting or by a commission or committee, proposals shall not be put to the vote unless copies thereof have been circulated at least 24 hours before the vote. The Chairperson of the Conference or of the commission or committee concerned may permit voting on amendments even though these amendments have not been circulated or have been circulated less than 24 hours before the vote.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications for admission of additional Member Nations and Associate Members (<u>30 days</u> before the opening of the Conference Session). | <p>GRO XIX.2: Any such application shall be transmitted immediately by the Director-General to Member Nations and shall be placed on the agenda of the next Conference session which opens not less than 30 days from the receipt of the application.</p> |

*Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts****Nomination procedure***

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| <p>Nomination of candidates shall be by Member Nations or by their delegates.</p> | <p>GRO XII.5: Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution or these Rules, the nomination of any candidate for an elective place to be filled by the Conference or Council shall be made by the government of a Member Nation or by its delegate or representative. Subject to the procedure for nomination provided in the Rules, the appointing body shall determine the nomination procedure.</p> |
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Quorum

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| <p>A meeting cannot open unless a quorum is present.</p> <p>Quorum in plenary is more than half the Member Nations.</p> <p>Before proceeding to a vote or election, the Chairperson must again ascertain that a quorum is present.</p> <p>In a Commission of the Conference, quorum for discussion and for voting on procedural matters (except for a motion for closure) is one-third of the Member Nations, but for voting on substantive questions and on motions for closure of the debate, the quorum is more than half the Member Nations.</p> <p>Quorum in Committees of Commissions is more than half the membership of the Committee.</p> <p>For the purposes of determining a quorum before the opening of a session, the delegation of a Member Organization is counted only if it has the voting rights for the first item of the agenda to be considered by the particular session of the meeting for which the quorum is sought. If the need to determine a quorum arises during the course of a session, as for example in connection with a call for a vote, then the Member Organization is counted if the item under discussion at the time or in</p> | <p>GRO XII.2:</p> <p>a) Except as otherwise provided by the Constitution or these Rules, in the Conference a majority of the Member Nations and in the Council a majority of the Members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.</p> <p>b) Before proceeding to a vote or election, the Chairperson shall announce the number of delegates or representatives present. If less than the number required for a quorum is present, the vote or election shall not be held.</p> <p>GRO XIII.5: The procedure in a commission shall be governed by the provisions of Rule XII, so far as applicable. One third of the members of a commission shall constitute a quorum for the consideration of items on the agenda of the commission and for decisions on questions of procedure with the exception of a motion for the closure of the debate on the item under discussion. A majority of the members of a commission shall constitute a quorum for decisions on substantive questions and for a decision on a motion for the closure of the debate on the item under discussion.</p> <p>GRO XIV.4: A majority of the members of each such committee shall constitute a quorum. Decisions in each such committee shall be taken by a majority of the votes cast. No member of any such committee shall have more than one vote.</p> <p>GRO XLV.1: For the purpose of determining a quorum, as specified in paragraph 2 of Rule XII, the delegation of a Member Organization shall be counted to the extent that it is entitled to vote in the meeting in respect of which the quorum is sought.</p> |
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respect of which the vote is being called for, is one in respect of which voting rights have been assigned to the Member Organization. In such cases, the Member Organization is counted as representing a number of potential votes equal to the number of its Member States that are entitled to vote in the meeting.

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Voting rights of Members and Associate Members

Member Nations have one vote each, but forfeit this right under certain circumstances.

Art. III.4: Each Member Nation shall have only one vote. A Member Nation which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the Conference if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years. The Conference may, nevertheless, permit such a Member Nation to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member Nation.

Member Organizations exercise membership rights on an alternative basis with their Member States that are Member Nations of the Organization.

Art. II.8: A Member Organization shall exercise membership rights on an alternative basis with its Member States that are Member Nations of the Organization in the areas of their respective competences and in accordance with rules set down by the Conference.

On the basis of the above-mentioned principle of the alternative exercise of membership rights, a Member Organization may exercise the multiple votes of its Member States on matters within its competence.

Art. II.10: Except as otherwise provided in this Constitution or in rules set down by the Conference, and Article III paragraph 4 notwithstanding, a Member Organization may exercise on matters within its competence, in any meeting of the Organization in which it is entitled to participate, a number of votes equal to the number of its Member States which are entitled to vote in such meeting. Whenever a Member Organization exercises its right to vote, its Member States shall not exercise theirs, and conversely.

A Member Organization is not entitled to participate in voting for elective places nor may it hold office in the Conference or the Council or any subsidiary body of the Conference or Council. This implies that a Member Organization may not propose or second any candidates for office at such meetings.

GRO XLV.2: Member Organizations shall not participate in voting for elective places as defined in paragraph 9(a) of Rule XII.

A Member Organization is not entitled to participate in voting on the budget. This includes not merely the vote on the level of the budget, but also other votes connected with the approval of the budget.

GRO XLIII.3: Member Organizations shall not hold office in the Conference or any subsidiary body of the Conference.

GRO XLIV: Member Organizations shall not hold office in the Council or any subsidiary body of the Council.

Art. XVIII.6: [...] A Member Organization shall not vote on the budget.

| | <i>Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts</i> |
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| Associate Members may not vote. | <p>Art. III.1: [...] Associate Members shall have the right to participate in the deliberations of the Conference but shall not hold office nor have the right to vote.</p> <p>GRO XII.28: Associate Members shall have the right to participate with Member Nations in matters pertaining to the conduct of business of meetings of the Conference, its commissions and committees, in accordance with the provisions of the foregoing paragraphs of this Rule, subject, however, to the limitations on voting and the holding of office stipulated in paragraph 1 of Article III of the Constitution, paragraph 3 of Rule XIII, paragraph 1 of Rule XIV and paragraph 1 of Rule XV of the General Rules of the Organization.</p> |

Majority requirements

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| <p>The normal majority is more than one half of votes cast (exceptions are listed in Rule XII.3(b) below).</p> <p>Multiple elections (to fill simultaneously more than one elective place) require a majority of the number of Members casting valid votes, i.e. the number of valid ballot papers deposited.</p> <p><u>Two-thirds majority:</u> The following are the cases in which, for a decision to be taken by the Conference, a two-thirds majority of the votes cast is required, provided that the total number of affirmative and negative votes cast shall be more than one half of the Member Nations of the Organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission of additional or Associate Members. • Approval of conventions and agreements. • Approval of agreements between the Organization and Member Governments. • Decisions on the level of the budget. • Formulation of recommendations to Member Governments. • Inclusion of new items on the Conference agenda after it has been formally adopted by the Conference. • Amendment or suspension of the General Rules of the Organization. | <p>GRO XII.3(a): Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution or these Rules, the required majority for any decision or for any election shall be more than one half of the votes cast.</p> <p>GRO XII.12(a)(ii): More than one-half of the number of Members casting valid votes shall constitute the required majority.</p> <p>GRO XII.3(b): Subject to the provisions of Article XX, paragraph 1 of the Constitution, when a two-thirds majority of the votes cast is required by the Constitution or these Rules for a decision to be taken by the Conference, the total number of affirmative and negative votes cast shall be more than one half of the Member Nations of the Organization. If these conditions are not fulfilled the proposal shall be considered as rejected.</p> |
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In the case of amendments by the Conference to the Constitution, a two-thirds majority of the votes cast is also required, provided that such majority is more than one half of the Member Nations in the Organization.

In the Council, in the case of approval of agreements and supplementary conventions and agreements and the addition of items to the Council's agenda during a session, a two-thirds majority of the membership of the Council is required. (i.e., at least 33 Council Members in favour).

Failure to obtain the required majority

Procedure in the case of an equally divided vote (on a matter which is not an election) resulting in a deadlock.

GRO XII.13(a): If a vote is equally divided on a matter other than an election, a second vote shall be taken at a subsequent meeting to be held not less than one hour after the conclusion of the meeting at which the equally divided vote occurred. If the second vote is also equally divided the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

Procedure in the case of failure to obtain majority in an election to a single place.

GRO XII.11: In any election for one elective place, other than that of the Director-General, if a candidate fails on the first ballot to obtain a majority of the votes cast, successive ballots shall be taken at such time or times as the Conference or Council shall decide, until a candidate obtains such a majority, provided that in an election for one elective place in which there are more than two candidates, the candidate having received the lowest number of votes at each ballot shall be eliminated.

The procedure in the case of failure to obtain the required majority in a multiple election is dealt with in Rule XII.12 (page 23).

Postponement of balloting in an election

Second or subsequent ballots may be postponed after the first ballot has been held.

GRO XII.13(b): At any stage in an election after the first ballot has been held, further balloting may be postponed by the Chairperson with the concurrence of the Conference or Council.

Raising points of order during a vote

A vote may be interrupted only on a point of order which is in connection with the voting.

GRO XII.14: Once voting has commenced, no delegate or representative may interrupt the voting except to rise to a point of order in connection with the voting.

*Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts****Definition of election***

The selection or appointment of an individual, nation or locality is an election.

GRO XII.9(a): For the purpose of the Rules, the term "election" means the selection or appointment of one or more individuals, nations or localities. The election of Council Members shall take place in accordance with the procedure laid down in Rule XXII paragraph 10(g). In other cases, more than one elective place shall be filled at the same election, unless the Conference or Council decide otherwise.

Definition of votes cast, abstentions and defective ballots

"Votes cast" means votes for and against or in the case of an election, votes for a specific candidate duly nominated. Abstentions or defective ballots are not counted as "votes cast".

Any ballot paper carrying a vote for an individual, nation or locality not validly nominated is defective.

In the case of an election to fill simultaneously more than one elective place, votes for more, or for less candidates than there are vacancies to be filled, shall be considered defective.

Ballot papers shall carry no other notation or mark except those required to indicate the vote, in accordance with the instructions given on the ballot paper.

However, a ballot paper shall be considered valid when there is no doubt as to the intention of the elector and when the conditions of Rule XII.4(c) (i, ii and iii) have been fulfilled.

In a vote by show of hands, a roll call vote or a secret ballot, abstentions are recorded as set out in Rule XII.4(b).

GRO XII.4(a): For the purpose of the Constitution and these Rules the phrase "votes cast" shall mean affirmative and negative votes, and shall not include abstentions or defective ballots.

GRO XII.4(c)(i): Any ballot paper carrying votes for more candidates than there are vacancies to be filled, or carrying a vote for an individual, nation or locality not validly nominated, shall be considered defective.

GRO XII.4(c)(ii): In the case of an election to fill simultaneously more than one elective place any ballot paper carrying votes for less candidates than there are vacancies to be filled shall also be considered defective.

GRO XII.4(c)(iii): The ballot paper shall carry no other notation or mark than those required for the purpose of indicating the vote.

GRO XII.4(c)(iv): Subject to (i), (ii) and (iii) above, a ballot paper shall be considered valid when there is no doubt as to the intention of the elector.

GRO XII.4(b): Abstentions shall be recorded:

- i) in a vote by show of hands, only for those delegates or representatives who raise their hands in response to the Chairperson's request for abstentions;
- ii) in a roll call vote, only for those delegates or representatives who reply "Abstention";
- iii) in a secret ballot, only for such ballot papers deposited in the ballot box as are either blank or marked "Abstention";
- iv) in a vote by electronic means, only for those delegates or representatives who indicate "Abstention".

Duties of Elections Officer

Duties of Elections Officer defined:

GRO XII.16: An officer of the Secretariat designated by the Director-General for each Conference or Council session, who shall be known as the elections officer, shall, with the assistance of a deputy or deputies, be responsible for the following duties:

- a) to ensure that the provisions of the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization regarding voting and electoral procedure are correctly carried out;
 - b) to be responsible for all arrangements for voting and elections;
 - c) to advise the Chairperson of the Conference or Council on all matters pertaining to voting procedures and mechanics;
 - d) to supervise the preparation of ballot papers and be responsible for their safe custody;
 - e) to report to the Chairperson of the Conference or Council the presence of a quorum before any vote is taken;
 - f) to maintain records of all election results, ensuring that they are faithfully recorded and published;
 - g) to undertake such other relevant duties as may arise in connection with voting and elections.
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Challenging the result of a vote or election

Procedure and time limits for challenging the result of a vote or election:

GRO XII.15:

- a) Any delegate or representative may challenge the result of a vote or election.
- b) In the case of a vote by show of hands or roll call vote, should the result be challenged, the Chairperson shall cause a second vote to be taken forthwith.
- c) A vote by show of hands or by roll call may be challenged only immediately after the result has been announced.
- d) A secret ballot may be challenged at any time within three months of the date upon which it took place or until the elected candidate takes office, whichever is the longer period.
- e) Should a vote or election by secret ballot be challenged, the Director-General shall cause the ballot papers and all relevant record sheets to be re-examined and shall circulate the result of the investigation, together with the original complaint, to all Member Nations of the Organization or of the Council, as appropriate.

*Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts***Types of Voting**

Voting shall be by show of hands, roll call or secret ballot. (GRO XII.6)

Roll Call Vote

Roll call vote employed:

- if requested by a delegate;
- if a majority of two-thirds is required.

The roll call is conducted in alphabetical order of Member Nations, the name of the first nation to be called being drawn by lot by the Chairperson.

Method of conducting show of hands and roll call vote. (It should be noted that in a roll call vote in the Plenary Hall an electronic panel will flash the reply given by each delegate as a check that he has been recorded correctly).

GRO XII.7:

a) Subject to the provisions of paragraph 10 of this Rule, a vote by roll call shall be taken either upon request of a delegate or representative, or if a majority of two-thirds is required by the Constitution or these Rules. Voting by roll call shall be conducted by calling in English alphabetical order the names of all Member Nations entitled to vote. The name of the first nation to be called shall be designated by lot drawn by the Chairperson. The delegate or representative of each Member Nation shall reply "Yes", "No", or "Abstention". At the conclusion of any roll call, the name of any Member Nation whose delegate or representative failed to answer shall be called again. The vote of each Member Nation participating in any vote by roll call shall be inserted in the record of the meeting.

b) The count and recording of votes by show of hands or by roll call shall be conducted by or under the supervision of the Conference or Council elections officer, appointed by the Director-General in accordance with the terms of paragraph 16 below.

c) If for two successive ballots by roll call the name of the same Member Nation is drawn, the name of another Member Nation shall be designated by lot or lots drawn by the Chairperson.

Secret Ballot

Secret ballot is used:

- for appointment of Director-General;
- for admission of Member Nations or Associate Members;
- for all other elections except where the election is uncontested;

- if the majority of Conference so requests.

Although elections generally require voting, in certain cases, and provided that there are not more candidates than vacancies, election may take place by clear general consent at the proposal of the Chairperson.

GRO XII.10(a): The appointment of the

Director-General and the admission of additional Member Nations and Associate Members shall be decided by secret ballot. Other elections shall likewise be decided by secret ballot, except that in the case of an election in which there are not more candidates than vacancies the Chairperson may submit to the Conference or Council that the appointment be decided by clear general consent.

GRO XII.10(b): Any other matter shall be decided by secret ballot if the Conference or Council so determines.

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

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| Several elective places may be filled at the same election (multiple election). | GRO XII.9(b): When one elective place is to be filled, the method of election by secret ballot shall be as provided in paragraph 11 of this Rule. When more than one elective place is to be filled at the same election, the method of election by secret ballot shall be as provided in paragraphs 12 of this Rule. |
| Appointment of tellers. | <p>GRO XII.10(c):</p> <p>i. For the purpose of a secret ballot the Chairperson of the Conference or Council shall appoint two tellers from among the delegates or representatives, or their alternates. In the case of a secret ballot for an election, the tellers shall be delegates or representatives, or their alternates, who are not parties directly interested in the election.</p> <p>ii. The duties of the tellers shall be to supervise the balloting procedure, count the ballot papers, decide on the validity of a ballot paper in any case of doubt, and certify the result of each ballot.</p> <p>iii. The same tellers may be appointed for successive ballots or elections.</p> |
| Ballot papers. | GRO XII.10(d): Ballot papers shall be duly initialled by an authorized officer of the secretariat of the Conference or Council. The elections officer shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with this requirement. For each ballot only one blank ballot paper shall be given to each delegation entitled to vote. |
| Voting booths. | GRO XII.10(e): For a vote by secret ballot, one or more voting booths shall be set up, supervised in such a manner as to ensure complete secrecy of the ballot. |
| Invalidated ballot papers may be replaced. | GRO XII.10(f): Should any delegate invalidate his ballot paper, he may, before leaving the precinct of the polling booths, request a new blank ballot paper, which shall be delivered to him by the elections officer on the surrender of the invalidated ballot paper. The invalidated ballot paper shall remain in the custody of the elections officer. |
| Attendance at counting of votes. | GRO XII.10(g): Should the tellers withdraw from the presence of the delegates or representatives in order to carry out the count of the votes, only the candidates or scrutineers appointed by the candidates may attend the count, but they shall not take part in the count. |
| Protection of secrecy of ballot. | GRO XII.10(h): Members of delegations and of the secretariat of the Conference or Council who are responsible for the supervision of any vote by secret ballot shall not disclose to any unauthorized person any information which might tend, or be presumed to tend, towards destroying the secrecy of the ballot. |
| Safe custody of ballot papers. | GRO XII.10(i): The Director-General shall be responsible for the safe custody of all ballot papers until the elected candidates take office or for three months after the date of the ballot, whichever is the longer period. |

Relevant provisions of the Basic Texts

Appointment of the Director-General

A special procedure applies for the holding of successive ballots in voting on the appointment of the Director-General.

GRO XXXVII.2: The Director-General shall be elected by a majority of votes cast. Until a candidate obtains the required majority, the following procedure shall apply:

- a) two ballots shall be held among all candidates;
- b) the candidate having received the smallest number of votes in the second ballot shall be eliminated;
- c) thereafter, successive ballots shall be held, and the candidate having received the smallest number of votes in any one of these ballots shall be eliminated, until only three candidates remain;
- d) two ballots shall be held among the three remaining candidates;
- e) the candidate having received the smallest number of votes during the second ballot referred to in subparagraph (d) above shall be eliminated;
- f) a subsequent ballot, or successive ballots if necessary, shall be held among the two remaining candidates until one candidate obtains the required majority;
- g) in the event of a tie between two or more candidates having received the smallest number of votes in one of the ballots referred to in subparagraphs (b) or (c) above, a separate ballot or, if necessary, separate ballots shall be held among such candidates, and the candidate having received the smallest number of votes in such ballot or ballots shall be eliminated;
- h) in the event of a tie between two candidates having received the smallest number of votes in the second of the two ballots referred to in subparagraph (d) above, or if all three candidates have received the same number of votes in that ballot, successive ballots shall be held among all three candidates until one candidate has received the smallest number of votes, after which the procedure provided in subparagraph (f) above shall apply.

Procedure for multiple elections

Votes must be cast for each of the places to be filled.

Abstentions must be on all the places to be voted upon on the ballot paper - abstention on some of the seats is not permitted.

The candidates receiving the largest number of votes are elected in the number of seats available, if they have received the required majority.

Second and subsequent ballots will be cast for the remaining candidates until all the places are filled.

If places cannot be filled because of two or more candidates receiving the same number of votes, a separate ballot is held among those candidates.

If no candidate receives the required majority, the candidate receiving the smallest number of votes in that ballot is eliminated and further ballots held with the remaining candidates.

GRO XII.12: In any election to fill simultaneously more than one elective place the following shall apply:

(a) i. In the Conference a majority of the Member Nations of the Organization and in the Council two-thirds of the Members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

ii. More than one-half of the number of Members casting valid votes shall constitute the required majority

b) Each elector, unless he wholly abstains, shall cast one vote for each elective place to be filled. Each vote shall be cast for a different candidate. Any ballot paper which is not in conformity with these requirements shall be declared defective.

c) The candidates who receive largest number of votes shall be declared elected in a number equal to the number of elective places to be filled, provided they have received the required majority defined in subparagraph (a)(ii) above.

d) If only some of the elective places have been filled after the first ballot, a second ballot shall be cast to fill the remaining elective places, under the same conditions as the first ballot. This procedure shall continue until all the elective places have been filled.

(e) If, at any stage during the election, one or more vacant places cannot be filled because of an equal number of votes having been obtained by two or more candidates, a separate ballot shall be held among such candidates to determine which of them shall be elected, in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (c) above. Such procedure will be repeated as necessary.

(f) If in any ballot no candidate receives the required majority, the candidate that receives the smallest number of votes in that ballot shall be eliminated.