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Organización de las
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COUNCIL

Hundred and Sixty-seventh Session

29 June 2021

Methods of Work for the 167th Session of the Council

Executive Summary

This document summarises the standing working methods of the Council, and outlines the special procedures to be applied to the 167th Session of the Council on an exceptional basis in light of the virtual modality of the Session. These special procedures are the result of consensus arising from informal consultations undertaken with the Membership by the Independent Chairperson of the Council for the 167th Session, and build upon special procedures enacted for the virtual 164th, 165th and 166th Sessions of the Council. Members of the Council will be invited to endorse these special procedures under item 1 on the Provisional Agenda of the 167th Session of the Council. The Report of the Session will record the Council's endorsement of these procedures in order to ensure the integrity of the Report of the Session and all recommendations and decisions contained therein.

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

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Standing Methods of Work for the Council

1. The standing methods of work for the Council, originally adopted by the Council at its 60th Session in June 1973¹, were revised by the Council at its 141st Session in April 2011², its 153rd Session in November/ December 2015, and its 160th Session in December 2018³.
2. Between sessions of the Conference, the Council acts on behalf of the Conference as its executive organ and makes decisions on matters specifically entrusted to it, taking into account the advice of subsidiary bodies as appropriate.
3. The Provisional Agenda is prepared in consultation with the Independent Chairperson of the Council and is issued together with the invitation letters 60 days before the date of commencement of the Council Session.
4. Council documents follow a standard format and contain an executive summary with a clear indication of any action the Council is requested to take. Unless the timing of the sessions of the bodies concerned makes it impossible, all documents are despatched at least four weeks before the opening of the session in question.
5. Except as otherwise provided in the Basic Texts, the decisions of the Council are taken by a majority of the votes cast, bearing in mind that the Independent Chairperson of the Council shall take steps to facilitate and achieve consensus among Members.
6. At the end of the debate on each item, the Chairperson makes a concise and focused summary of the conclusions and recommendations emerging from the debate as an input to form the basis of the draft Council report. The draft conclusions are projected onscreen in plenary to facilitate a better understanding of the proposed text, with some flexibility afforded to the Drafting Committee in finalising the draft report while not reopening substantive discussions which remains the prerogative of the plenary meeting.
7. Verbatim records are kept of Council plenary meetings and accordingly Council reports, while recording in an unambiguous manner all decisions reached by the Council, are as concise as possible.
8. A draft report is normally prepared by the Drafting Committee or through another suitable arrangement agreed by the Council, with Secretariat assistance. Reports consist of the conclusions, decisions and recommendations on matters discussed by the Council.

Special Procedures for a Virtual Meeting of the Council Exceptional to its 167th Session

9. The Independent Chairperson of the Council has consulted with Members on the modalities of the 167th Session of the Council. The outcome of these consultations are reflected in the procedures detailed in this section.
10. The special procedures outlined in this section apply on an exceptional basis for the 167th Session of the Council in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting virtual modality of this Council Session. The adoption of such procedures shall not create a precedent for the working methods of the Council for its future Sessions.

Functions of the Council

11. The virtual modality of the 167th Session of the Council does not alter any of the functions of the Council.

Conduct of Debate

12. All plenary meetings of the 167th Session of the Council will be conducted through the Zoom videoconferencing platform. Members and Observers of the Council will be granted equal

¹ CL 60/REP, paras 170-179 and Appendix G.

² CL 141/REP, para 51 and Appendix G.

³ CL 160/REP, paras 33 and 34

accessibility and capability inside the Zoom meeting platform, ensuring their ability to be seen, and to view who is in attendance in the virtual meeting, and to address the Council.

13. Participants will be requested to indicate their identity inside the Zoom videoconferencing platform in the following format: [Member Nation/Member Organization name] [(M) – for member, or (O) for observer of the Council]. This will enable the Independent Chairperson and all participants to recognize the identity of the speakers. Participants will use the ‘raise hand’ function in the Zoom platform in order to request the floor.

Other Matters

14. All documents for the session are prepared and disseminated by the Secretariat as per established practice, in all six languages of the Organization.

15. The time zone applicable to the Council’s 167th Session Timetable will be Central European Summer Time (UTC +2). This is the time zone of the headquarters of the Organization, and the location of the meeting as if it were held as a physical meeting.

16. The meetings of the 167th Session of the Council will be scheduled in line with established practice, from 9.30 to 12.30 in the morning, and from 14.30 to 17.30 in the afternoon if necessary.

17. The Independent Chairperson of the Council may call for a short break of up to ten minutes at any time during the meeting.

18. Simultaneous interpretation in all six languages of the Organization will be provided for all virtual meetings of the 167th Session of the Council.

Elections

19. The Chairpersons and Members of the Council Committees are elected by secret ballot, except that in the case in which there are not more candidates than vacancies, the Chairperson may submit to the Council that the appointment be decided by clear general consent.⁴

20. As outlined in documents CL 167/LIM/1; CL 167/LIM2; and CL 167/LIM3, there are the same number of candidates as vacant seats for the Chairpersons and Membership of the Programme and Finance Committees and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters. The Council may therefore endorse the nominations by clear general consent on the virtual platform, without recourse to a vote at the 167th Session of the Council.

Reports and Records

21. The draft Report of the 167th Session of the Council will be presented for adoption by the Council during a virtual plenary meeting of the Council. The draft Report will be shared on screen following the conclusion of all items on its agenda. The Council may make adjustments to the draft Report at this time.

22. The Report of the 167th Session of the Council will be communicated in accordance with Rule VI.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council.

23. The Report of the 167th Session of the Council will record the Council’s consensus on the amended modalities for the Session outlined in this Note.

24. The Report of the 167th Session of the Council will record the Council’s agreement to suspend any rules incompatible with the virtual setting, including Rule II.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council which states that “*each Session of the Council shall be held at the seat of the Organization unless, in pursuance of a previous decision of the Council or at the request of a majority of its Members, another place is designated.*”

25. The verbatim records of the 167th Session of the Council shall be made available in line with Rule VI.1 of the Rules of the Procedure of the Council.

⁴ Rule XII.10 (a)