

United Nations Conference on the Elimination or Reduction of Future Statelessness

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Provisional Rules of Procedure



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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ELIMINATION
OR REDUCTION OF FUTURE STATELESSNESS

Provisional Rules of Procedure

(Prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations)

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Rules of procedure of the United Nations Conference on the
Reduction or Elimination of Future Statelessness

CHAPTER I - REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Composition of delegations

Rule 1

The delegation of each State participating in the Conference shall consist of accredited representatives and such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

Alternates or advisers

Rule 2

An alternate representative or an adviser may act as a representative upon designation by the Chairman of the delegation.

Submission of credentials

Rule 3

The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary if possible not later than twenty-four hours after the opening of the Conference. The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of the State or Government, or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The President and Vice-Presidents shall examine the credentials and report without delay to the Conference.

Provisional participation in the Conference

Rule 4

Pending a decision of the Conference upon their credentials, representatives shall be entitled provisionally to participate in the Conference.

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CHAPTER II - PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

Elections

Rule 5

1. The Conference shall elect a President and two Vice-Presidents from among the heads of the delegations.
2. The President shall preside at the meetings of the Conference.
3. If the President is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, a Vice-President designated by him shall preside in his place.

Rule 6

The President, or Vice-President acting as President, shall participate in the proceedings of the Conference in that capacity. He shall not vote, but shall appoint another member of his delegation to vote in his place.

CHAPTER III - SECRETARIAT

Duties of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat

Rule 7

1. The Secretary-General of the Conference shall be the Secretary-General of the United Nations. He, or his representative, shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Conference and its Committees.
2. The Secretary-General shall appoint an Executive Secretary of the Conference and shall provide and direct the staff required by the Conference and its committees.
3. The Secretariat shall receive, translate, reproduce and distribute documents, reports and resolutions of the Conference; interpret speeches made at the meetings, prepare and circulate records of the public meetings; have the custody and preservation of the documents in the archives of the United Nations; publish the reports of the public meetings; distribute all documents of the Conference to the participating Governments, and generally, perform all other work which the Conference may require.

Statements by the Secretariat

Rule 8

The Secretary-General or any member of the staff designated for that purpose may make oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration.

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CHAPTER IV - CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Quorum

Rule 9

A quorum shall be constituted by the representatives of a majority of the States participating in the Conference.

General powers of the President

Rule 10

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him elsewhere by these rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of each plenary meeting of the Conference, direct the discussions at such meetings, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. He shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules of procedure, have complete control of the proceedings and over the maintenance of order thereat. The president may propose to the Conference the limitation of time to be allowed to speakers, the limitation of the number of times each representative may speak on any question, the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. He may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion.

Speeches

Rule 11

No person may address the Conference without having previously obtained the permission of the President. Subject to Rules 12 and 13 the President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The President may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

Precedence

Rule 12

The Chairman or Rapporteur of a committee, or the representative of a sub-committee or working group may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusion arrived at by his committee, sub-committee or working group.

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Points of order

Rule 13

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may rise to a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the President in accordance with the rules of procedure. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives present and voting. A representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Time limit on speeches

Rule 14

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

Closing of list of speakers

Rule 15

During the course of a debate the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Conference, declare the list closed. He may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if a speech delivered after he has declared the list closed makes this desirable.

Adjournment of debate

Rule 16

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. The President may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule.

Closure of debate

Rule 17

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the question under discussion, whether or not any other representative has signified

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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 is in favour of the closure, the President shall declare the closure of the debate. The President may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule.

Suspension or adjournment of the meeting

Rule 18

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated, but shall be immediately put to the vote. The president may limit the time to be allowed to speaker moving the suspension or adjournment.

Order of procedural motions

Rule 19

Subject to rule 13, the following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other motions before the meeting:

- (a) To suspend the meeting;
- (b) To adjourn the meeting;
- (c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion;
- (d) For the closure of the debate on the question under discussion.

Proposals and amendments

Rule 20

Proposals and amendments shall normally be introduced in writing and handed to the Executive Secretary of the Conference who shall circulate copies to the delegations. As a general rule, no proposal or amendment shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Conference unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting. The President may, however, permit the discussion, consideration of and voting upon proposals or amendments even though these proposals or amendments have not been circulated or have only been circulated the same day.

Decisions on competence

Rule 21

Subject to rule 13, any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Conference to discuss any matter or to adopt a proposal or an amendment submitted to it shall be put to the vote before the matter is discussed or a vote is taken on the proposal or amendment in question.

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Withdrawal of motions

Rule 22

A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended. A motion which has thus been withdrawn may be reintroduced by any representative.

Reconsideration of proposals and amendments

Rule 23

When a proposal or amendment has been adopted or rejected it may not be reconsidered unless the Conference, by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on the motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion after which it shall be immediately put to the vote.

Invitations to persons to give technical advice

Rule 24

The Conference may invite to one or more of its meetings any person whose technical advice it may consider useful for its work.

CHAPTER V - VOTING

Voting rights

Rule 25

Each state represented at the Conference shall have one vote.

Majority required for decisions

Rule 26

1. Decisions of the Conference, other than decisions under rule 23, shall be made by a majority of the representatives present and voting.
2. For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "representatives present and voting" means representatives present and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives who abstain from voting shall be considered as not voting.

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Method of voting

Rule 27

The Conference shall normally vote by show of hands or by standing, but any representative may request a roll-call. The roll-call shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the States participating in the Conference beginning with the delegation whose name is drawn by lot by the President.

Conduct during voting

Rule 28

1. After the President has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connexion with the actual conduct of the voting. The President may permit representatives to explain their votes, either before or after the voting, except when the vote is taken by secret ballot. The President may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations.

2. For the purpose of this rule "voting" refers to the voting on each individual proposal or amendment.

Division of proposals and amendments

Rule 29

A representative may move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment shall be voted on separately. If objection is made to the request for division, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given only to two speakers in favour and two speakers against. 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.

Voting on amendments

Rule 30

When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the Conference shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest 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 amendment, the latter amendment 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.

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Voting on proposalsRule 31

If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the Conference shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted. The Conference may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

ElectionsRule 32

All elections shall be held by secret ballot unless otherwise decided by the Conference.

Rule 33

1. If, when one person or one delegation is to be elected, no candidate obtains in the first ballot a majority of the representatives present and voting, a second ballot restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes shall be taken. If in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the President shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.

2. In the case of a tie in the first ballot among three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes, a second ballot shall be held. If a tie results among more than two candidates, the number shall be reduced to two by lot and the balloting, restricted to them, shall continue in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

Rule 34

When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining in the first ballot a majority of the representatives present and voting shall be elected. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of persons or delegations to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot, to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled; provided that, after the third inconclusive ballot, votes may be cast for any eligible, person or delegation. If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots shall be restricted to the candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes in the third of the unrestricted ballots, to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled, and the following three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted, and so on until all the places have been filled.

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Equally divided votes

Rule 35

If a vote is equally divided on matters other than elections, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

Errors in voting

Rule 36

Unless it can be shown by a representative or the Secretariat, to the satisfaction of the President, that a clerical or arithmetical error has occurred, the results of voting on a proposal or amendment, as announced by the President, shall be final and conclusive.

CHAPTER VI - COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND
WORKING GROUPS

Establishment of Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups

Rule 37

The Conference may establish such committees, sub-committees and working groups as may be necessary for the performance of its functions and define the terms of reference and composition of each committee.

Election of officers

Rule 38

Each committee and sub-committee shall elect its own officers.

Conduct of business

Rule 39

So far as they are applicable, the rules of procedure of the Conference shall apply to the proceedings of the committees and sub-committees. A committee or a sub-committee may dispense with certain language interpretations.

CHAPTER VII - LANGUAGES AND RECORDS

Official and working languages

Rule 40

Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the official languages of the Conference. English, French and Spanish shall be working languages.

Interpretation from a working language

Rule 41

Speeches made in any of the working languages shall be interpreted into the other two working languages.

Interpretation from official languages

Rule 42

Speeches made in either of the other two official languages shall be interpreted into the three working languages.

Interpretation from other languages

Rule 43

Any representative may make a speech in a language other than the official languages. In this case he shall himself provide for interpretation into one of the working languages. Interpretation into the other working languages by the interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first working language.

Summary records

Rule 44

Summary records of the plenary meetings of the Conference and of the meetings of its committees shall be kept by the Secretariat. They shall be sent as soon as possible to all representatives who shall inform the Secretariat within three working days after the circulation of the summary record of any changes they wish to have made.

Language of documents and summary records

Rule 45

Documents and summary records shall be made available in the working languages.

CHAPTER VIII - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEETINGS

Plenary meetings and meetings of committees

Rule 46

The plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of its committees shall be held in public unless the body concerned decides that exceptional circumstances require that a particular meeting be held in private.

Meetings of sub-committees or working groups

Rule 47

As a general rule meetings of a sub-committee or working group shall be held in private.

Communiqué to the Press

Rule 48

At the close of any private meeting a communiqué may be issued to the Press through the Executive Secretary.

CHAPTER IX - SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, OTHER INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Rule 49

1. Observers of specialized agencies and inter-governmental bodies invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference and its committees, upon the invitation of the President or Chairman, as the case may be, on questions within the scope of their activities.

2. Written statements of such specialized agencies and inter-governmental bodies shall be distributed by the Secretariat to the delegations at the Conference.

Rule 50

Non-governmental organizations attending the Conference may, upon the invitation of the President, submit written or oral statements to the Conference on subjects for which these organizations have a special competence.
