

# COMMITTEE RULES OF PROCEDURE

## *General Rules*

**RULE #1 - SCOPE:** These rules for the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Monetary Fund, the European Council, the European Political and Security Committee, the Mideast Summit, the Organization for African Unity, the Organization of American States, the International Court of Justice, and the Security Council are self-sufficient, except for modifications provided by the Secretariat, and will be considered adopted in advance of session. No other rules of procedure are applicable.

**RULE #2 - LANGUAGE:** English will be the official and working language of the conference.

**RULE #3 - DELEGATIONS:** Each member will be represented by one or two delegates and one vote on each committee.

**RULE #4 - CREDENTIALS:** The credentials of all delegations have been accepted upon registration. Actions relating to the modification of rights, privileges, or credentials of any member may not be initiated without the written consent of the Secretary-General. Any representative to whose admission a member objects will provisionally be seated with the same rights as other representatives, pending a decision from the Secretary-General.

**RULE #5 - PARTICIPATION OF NON-MEMBERS:** Representatives of Accredited Observers will have the same rights as those of full members, except that they may not sign or vote on resolutions or amendments. A representative of an organization that is not a member of the United Nations or an Accredited Observer may address a committee only with the prior approval of the Director.

**RULE #6 - STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARIAT:** The Secretary-General or a member of the Secretariat designated by him/her may at any time make either written or oral statements to the committee.

**RULE #7 - GENERAL POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE STAFF:** The Committee Director will declare the opening and closing of each meeting and may propose the adoption of any procedural motion to which there is no significant objection. The Director, subject to these rules, will have complete control of the proceedings at any meeting. The Director will also direct discussions, accord the right to speak, put questions, announce decisions, rule on points of order, and ensure and enforce the observance of these rules. The Director may temporarily transfer his duties to another member of the Committee staff. Committee staff members may also advise delegations on the possible course of debate. In the exercise of these functions, the Committee staff will be at all times subject to these rules and responsible to the Secretary-General.

**RULE #8 - APPEAL:** Any decision of the Moderator or Director, with the exception of those matters that are explicitly stated to be unappealable, may be appealed immediately by a delegate. The Director may speak briefly in defense of the ruling. The appeal will then be put to a vote, and the decision of the Chair will stand unless overruled by a majority of those members present and voting. The Director's decision not to sign a resolution or amendment is never appealable. A

“Yes” vote indicates support of the Chair’s ruling; a “No” vote indicates opposition to that ruling. The Chair’s ruling will stand unless overruled by a majority of “No” votes.

**RULE #9 - QUORUM:** The Director may declare a Committee open and permit debate to proceed when at least one- quarter of the members of the Committee (as declared at the beginning of the first session) are present. A member of the Committee is a representative who is officially registered with the Conference. The presence of a majority of the members will be required for the vote on any substantive motion. A quorum will be assumed to be present unless specifically challenged and shown to be absent. A roll call is never required to determine the presence of a quorum.

**Rule #10 - COURTESY:** Delegates will show courtesy and respect to the Committee staff and to other delegates. The Director will immediately call to order any delegate who fails to comply with this rule.

### *Rules Governing Debate*

**RULE #11 - AGENDA:** The first order of business for the Committee will be the consideration of the Agenda.

- A motion should be made to put a topic area first on the agenda. This motion requires a second.
- A Speakers List will be established for and against the motion.
- A motion to close debate will be in order after the Committee has heard two speakers for the motion and two against, or all the speakers on one side and at least two on the opposite side. In accordance with the normal procedure described in Rule 15, the Director will recognize two speakers against the motion to close debate, and a vote of two-thirds is required for closure of debate on the agenda.
- When debate is closed, the Committee will move to an immediate vote on the motion. A simple majority is required for passage. If the motion fails, the other topic area will automatically be placed first on the agenda.
- A motion to proceed to the second Topic Area is in order only after the Committee has adopted or rejected a resolution on the first Topic Area. A motion to proceed to the second agenda item after a resolution has *failed* requires a second and is debatable to the extent of one speaker in favor and one against. This motion requires a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting to pass.
- In the event of an international crisis or emergency, the Secretary-General or his/her representative may call upon a committee to table debate on the current topic area so that the more urgent matter may be attended to immediately. After a resolution has been passed on the crisis topic, the committee will return to debate on the tabled topic. If a resolution on the crisis topic fails, the committee may return to debate on the tabled topic area only at the discretion of the Secretary-General or his/her representative.

**RULE #12 - DEBATE:** After the Agenda has been determined, one continuously open Speakers’ List will be established for the purpose of general debate. This Speakers’ List will be followed for all debate on the Topic Area, except when superseded by procedural motions, amendments, or the introduction of a resolution. Speakers may speak generally on the Topic Area being considered and may address any resolution currently on the floor. Once a resolution has been introduced, it remains on the floor and may be debated until it fails, the Committee postpones debate on it, or the Committee moves to the next topic area.

**RULE #13 - CAUCUS:** A motion to caucus is in order at any time when the floor is open, prior to closure of debate. The delegate making the motion must briefly explain its purpose and specify a time limit for the caucus, not to exceed twenty minutes. The motion will immediately be put to a vote. A majority of members present and voting is required for passage. The Director may rule the motion out of order and his/her decision is not subject to appeal.

**RULE #14 - MODERATED CAUCUS:** The purpose of the moderated caucus is to facilitate substantive debate at critical junctures in the discussion. In a moderated caucus, the Director will temporarily depart from the Speakers' List and call on delegates to speak at his or her discretion. A motion for a moderated caucus is in order at any time when the floor is open, prior to closure of debate. The delegate making the motion must briefly explain its purpose and specify a time limit for the caucus, not to exceed twenty minutes, and a time limit for the individual speeches. Once raised, the motion will be voted on immediately, with a majority of members present and voting required for passage. The Moderator may rule the motion out of order and his decision is not subject to appeal.

**RULE #15 - CLOSURE OF DEBATE:** When the floor is open, a delegate may move to close debate on the substantive or procedural matter under discussion. The Director may, subject to appeal, rule such a motion dilatory. When closure of debate is moved, the Director may recognize up to two speakers against the motion. No speaker in favor of the motion will be recognized. Closure of debate requires the support of two-thirds of the members present and voting. If the Committee is in favor of closure, the Moderator will declare the closure of the debate, and all resolutions and amendments on the floor will be brought to an immediate vote.

**RULE #16 - SUSPENSION OR ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING:** Whenever the floor is open, a delegate may move for the *suspension of the meeting*, to suspend all Committee functions until the next meeting, or for the *adjournment of the meeting*, to suspend all Committee functions for the duration of the Conference. The Director may rule such motions out of order; these decisions will not be subject to appeal. When in order, such will not be debatable but will be immediately put to the vote and will require a majority to pass. A motion to adjourn will be out of order prior to the lapse of three-quarters of the time allotted for the last meeting of the Committee.

**RULE #17 - POSTPONEMENT AND RESUMPTION OF DEBATE:** Whenever the floor is open, a delegate may move for the *postponement of debate* on a resolution or amendment currently on the floor. The motion, otherwise known as "tabling," will require a two-thirds vote to pass and will be debatable to the extent of one speaker in favor and one opposed. No debate or action will be allowed on any resolution or amendment on which debate has been postponed. A motion to *resume debate* on an amendment or resolution on which debate has been postponed will require a majority to pass and will be debatable to the extent of one speaker in favor and one opposed. Resumption of debate will cancel the effects of postponement of debate.

**RULE #18 - RECONSIDERATION:** A motion to reconsider is in order when a resolution or amendment has been adopted or rejected, and must be made by a member *who voted with the majority* on the substantive proposal. The Moderator will recognize two speakers opposing the motion after whom the motion will be immediately put to a vote. A two-thirds majority of the members present and voting is required for reconsideration.

## *Rules Governing Speeches*

**RULE #19 - SPEAKERS LIST:** The Committee will have an open Speakers' List for the Topic Area being discussed. Separate Speakers' Lists will be established as needed for procedural motions and debate on amendments. A country may add its name to the Speakers' List by submitting a request in writing to the Chair, provided that country is not already on the Speakers' List. The names of the next several countries to speak will always be posted for the convenience of the Committee. The Speakers' List for the second topic area will not be open until the Committee has proceeded to that topic. *The General Speakers' List of a Topic Area may never be closed.*

**RULE #20 - SPEECHES:** No delegate may address a session without having previously obtained the permission of the Director. The Director may call a speaker to order if his/her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion, or are offensive to committee members or staff.

**RULE #21 - TIME-LIMIT ON SPEECHES:** The Director may limit the time allotted to each speaker. The minimum time-limit will be ten seconds. When a delegate exceeds the allotted time, the Moderator may call the speaker to order.

**RULE #22 - YIELDS:** A delegate granted the right to speak on a substantive issue may yield in one of three ways: to another delegate, to questions, or to the Chair. Please note that only one yield is allowed.

- *Yield to another delegate.* His/her remaining time will be given to that delegate, who may not, however, make any further yields. To turn the floor over to a co-delegate is not considered a yield.
- *Yield to questions.* Questioners will be selected by the Director and limited to one question each. Follow-up questions will be allowed only at the discretion of the Director. The Director will have the right to call to order any delegate whose question is, in the opinion of the Director, rhetorical and leading and not designed to elicit information. Only the speaker's answers to questions will be deducted from the speaker's remaining time.
- *Yield to the chair.* Such a yield should be made if the delegate does not wish to yield his/her speech to questions or another delegate. The Director will then move to the next speaker. Delegates must declare any yield by the conclusion of his/her speech. If time runs out, the Director will simply move on to the next speaker.

**RULE #23 - RIGHT OF REPLY:** A delegate whose personal or national integrity has been impugned by another delegate may request a Right of Reply. The Director's decision whether to grant the Right of Reply is unappealable, and a delegate granted a Right of Reply will not address the committee except at the request of the Director. A Right of Reply to a Right of Reply is out of order.

## *Points*

**RULE #24 - POINTS OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE:** Whenever a delegate experiences personal discomfort which impairs his/her ability to participate in the proceedings, he or she may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege to request that the discomfort be corrected. While a Point of Personal Privilege may interrupt a speaker, delegates should use this power with the utmost discretion.

**RULE #25 - POINTS OF ORDER:** During the discussion of any matter, a delegate may rise to a Point of Order to indicate an instance of improper parliamentary procedure. The Point of Order will be immediately decided by the Director in accordance with these rules of procedure. The Director may rule out of order those points that are dilatory or improper; such a decision is unappealable. A representative rising to a Point of Order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion. A Point of Order may only interrupt a speaker if the speech itself is not following proper parliamentary procedure.

**RULE #26 - POINTS OF PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY:** When the floor is open, a delegate may rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry to ask the Director a question regarding the rules of procedure. A Point of Parliamentary Inquiry may never interrupt a speaker. Delegates with substantive questions should not rise to this Point, but should rather approach the committee staff during caucus.

### *Rules Governing Substantive Issues*

**RULE #27 - WORKING PAPERS:** Delegates may propose *working papers* for committee consideration. Working papers are intended to aid the Committee in its discussion and formulation of resolutions and need not be written in resolution format. Working papers are not official documents, but do require the signature of the Director to be copied and distributed.

**RULE #28 - RESOLUTIONS:** A *resolution* may be introduced when it receives the approval of the Director and is signed by one-fifth of the number of delegations that are present and voting at the beginning of the committee session. Signing a resolution need not indicate support of the resolution, and the signer has no further obligations. *There are no official sponsors of resolutions.* Resolutions require a simple majority to pass.

**RULE #29 - INTRODUCING RESOLUTIONS:** Once a resolution has been approved as stipulated above and has been copied and distributed, a delegate may rise to introduce the resolution. The content of such an introduction will be limited to reading the operatives of the resolution. Such an introduction will be considered procedural in nature, and hence, yields are out of order. More than one resolution may be on the floor at any one time, but at most one resolution may be passed per Topic Area. *A resolution will remain on the floor until debate on that specific resolution is postponed or closed or a resolution on that Topic Area has been passed.* Debate on resolutions proceeds according to the Topic Area General Speakers' List.

**RULE #30 - COMPETENCE:** A motion to question the competence of the Committee to discuss a resolution or amendment is in order *only* immediately after the resolution has been introduced. The motion requires a majority to pass and is debatable to the extent of one speaker for and one against.

**RULE #31 - AMENDMENTS:** Delegates may amend any resolution which has been introduced. An amendment must have the approval of the Director and the signatures of one-eighth of the number of delegations present and voting at the beginning of the committee session. Amendments to amendments are out of order; however, an amended part of a resolution may be further amended. *There are no official sponsors of amendments or friendly amendments. Preambulatory phrases may not be amended.*

- An approved amendment may be introduced when the floor is open. General Debate will be suspended and a Speakers' List will be established for and against the amendment.

- A motion to close debate will be in order after the Committee has heard two speakers for the amendment and two against or all the speakers on one side and at least two on the other side. Following the normal procedure of Rule 15, the Director will recognize two speakers against the motion to close debate, and a vote of two-thirds is required for closure.
- When debate is closed on the amendment, the Committee will move to an immediate vote. After the vote, debate will resume according to the general Speakers List.

## *Rules Governing Voting*

**RULE #32 - DIVISION OF THE QUESTION:** After debate on any resolution or amendment has been closed, a delegate may move that operative parts of the proposal be voted on separately. Preambulatory clauses and sub-operative clauses may not be removed by division of the question. *The only substantive vote on a motion to divide the question is the final vote on the resolution. Thus, there are no abstentions.*

- The Director will take any further motions to divide the question and then arrange them from most severe to least.
- If an objection is made to a motion to divide the question, that motion will be debated to the extent of two speakers for and two against, to be followed by an immediate procedural vote on that motion.
- If the motion receives the simple majority required to pass, the resolution or amendment will be divided accordingly, and a separate procedural vote will be taken on each divided part to determine whether or not it is included in the final draft.
- Parts of the resolution or amendment that are subsequently passed will be recombined into a final document and will be put to a substantive vote as a whole, requiring a simple majority to pass. If all of the operative parts of the substantive proposal are rejected, the proposal will be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

**RULE #33 - VOTING:** Each country will have one vote. Each vote may be a “Yes,” “No,” or “Abstain.” “Members present and voting” will be defined as members casting an affirmative or negative vote. *Members who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.* All matters will be voted upon by placards, except in the case of a roll call vote. After the Director has announced the beginning of voting, no delegate can interrupt the voting except on a Point of Personal Privilege or a Point of Order in connection with the actual conduct of voting. A simple majority requires “Yes” votes from more than half the members present and voting; *ties fail*. A two-thirds vote requires at least twice as many “Yes” votes as “No” votes.

**RULE #34 - ROLL CALL VOTING:** After debate is closed on any resolution or amendment, any delegate may request a roll call vote. Such a motion may be made from the floor, seconded by 10 members of the GA, 5 members of the Economic and Social Council and Specialized Agencies. *A motion for a roll call vote is in order only for substantive motions.*

- In a roll call vote, the Director will call countries in alphabetical order starting with a randomly selected member.
- In the first sequence, delegates may vote “Yes,” “No,” “Abstain,” or “Pass.” A delegate who does not pass may request the right to explain his/her vote.
- A delegate who passes during the first sequence of the roll call must vote (i.e. may not abstain) during the second sequence. The same delegate may request the right to explain his/her vote. The Director will then call for changes of votes.
- All delegates who had requested the right of explanation will be granted time to explain their votes.
- The Director will then announce the outcome of the vote.

## *Precedence of Motions*

**PRECEDENCE:** Motions will be considered in the following order of preference:

1. Parliamentary Points
  - a. Points that interrupt a speaker: Points of Personal Privilege (Rule 25), Points of Order (Rule 25)
  - b. Points that are in order only when the floor is open: Points of Parliamentary Inquiry (Rule 26)
2. Procedural motions that are not debatable:
  - a. Adjournment of the Meeting (Rule 16)
  - b. Suspension of the Meeting (Rule 16)
  - c. Caucusing (Rule 13)
  - d. Moderated Caucusing (Rule 14)
3. Procedural motions that are applicable to a resolution or amendment under consideration:
  - a. Closure of Debate (Rule 15)
  - b. Postponement of Debate (Rule 17)
  - c. Competence (Rule 30)
  - d. Division of the Question (Rule 32)
4. Substantive motions:
  - a. Amendments (Rule 31)
  - b. Resolution (Rules 28-29)
5. Other procedural motions:
  - a. Resumption of Debate (Rule 17)
  - b. Reconsideration (Rule 18)