

Provisional Rules of Procedure

Travaux préparatoires, 13 April 1951



I. REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Rule 1

Each State participating in the Conference shall be represented by plenipotentiaries, one of whom shall be the head of the delegation, and by such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

Rule 2

The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and other members of delegations shall be communicated to the Executive Secretary without delay. The President and Vice-Presidents shall examine the credentials and submit their report to the Conference.

Rule 3

Pending the decision of the Conference upon the report on credentials, all representatives shall be entitled provisionally to be seated in the Conference.

II. PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

Rule 4

The Conference shall elect a President and two Vice-Presidents from among the heads of the delegations.

If the President is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, a Vice-President nominated by him shall take his place.

Rule 5

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.

III. SECRETARIAT

Rule 6

The Executive Secretary of the Conference, appointed by the Secretary-General, shall be responsible for making all arrangements connected with the meetings of the Conference. He may make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration. He may appoint an assistant to take his place at any meeting.

IV. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 7

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

Rule 8

The President shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Conference. At such meetings he shall direct the discussions, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, announce decisions, rule on points of order, and, subject to these rules of procedure, have complete control of the proceedings. If a ruling of the President is challenged, he shall immediately put it to the vote of the Conference.

V. VOTING

Rule 9

Each Government represented at the Conference shall have one vote.

Rule 10

Decisions of the Conference shall be made by a majority of the representatives of States participating in the Conference present and voting.

Representatives who abstain from voting shall be considered as not voting.

Rule 11

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 proposals.

Rule 12

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 further 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. 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, or revises any part of that proposal.

Rule 13

The Conference may, at the request of the representative of a State participating in the Conference, decide to put to the vote separately the various parts of a proposal or a resolution. In such case the text resulting from the various votes shall be put to the vote as a whole.

Rule 14

1. When the President has announced that the voting has begun, it may not be interrupted except on a point of order in connexion with the actual conduct of the voting.
2. Representatives of States participating in the Conference may explain their votes either before or after the voting.

Rule 15

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

VI. LANGUAGES

Rule 16

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

Rule 17

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

Rule 18

Speeches made in any of the other three official languages shall be interpreted into both working languages.

Rule 19

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

VII. RECORDS

Rule 20

The Secretariat shall draw up a summary record in the working languages of each meeting of the Conference.

Rule 21

All resolutions, recommendations and other formal decisions of the Conference shall be drawn up in the official languages.

VIII. PUBLICITY OF MEETINGS

Rule 22

The meetings of the Conference shall be held in public unless the Conference decides otherwise.

IX. COMMISSIONS

Rule 23

1. The Conference shall establish such commission as it may deem necessary for the performance of its functions. It shall define the terms of reference and composition of each commission.
2. Each commission shall elect its own officers.

Rule 24

So far as they are applicable, the rules of procedure of the Conference shall apply to the proceedings of commissions. Commissions may, by agreement, decide to adopt, for interpretation purposes, provisions simpler than those in the present rules of procedure.

X. UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Rule 25

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or his representative, shall participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference and may make any statement he considers necessary.

XI. OBSERVERS FROM STATES NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE CONFERENCE

Rule 26

1. A State not participating in the Conference may delegate an observer to it. The name of the observer shall be communicated without delay to the Executive Secretary.
2. Observers shall take part, without a right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference.

XII. SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Rule 27

1. Representatives of the specialized agencies taking part in the Conference shall be authorized to be present, without a right to vote, at the proceedings of the Conference and to submit proposals which may be put to the vote at the request of the representative of a State participating in the Conference.
2. Representatives of non-governmental organizations which have been granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council, who are attending the Conference, may submit oral or written statements to the Conference in accordance with paragraphs 28, 29 and 30 of the arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations approved by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 288 B(X) of 27 February 1950.

XIII. AMENDMENTS

Rule 28

The Conference may amend these rules of procedure.