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## **RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COUNCIL**

### **Preamble**

1. The present Rules of Procedure of the Council, adopted in pursuance of No. 67 of the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union, Geneva, 1992 (hereinafter referred to as “the Constitution”), shall enter into force on 1 July 1995.
2. Those provisions of the Constitution and of the Convention of the International Telecommunication Union (hereinafter referred to as "the Convention") which apply to the Council but which require neither amplification nor interpretation are not reproduced here.
3. Should situations not provided for in these Rules arise, the appropriate provisions of the Rules of Procedure of conferences and other meetings in Chapter III of the Convention shall be applied.

## Definitions

*Member of the Council:* one of the Members of the Union elected to the Council by a plenipotentiary conference.

*Councillor:* the person appointed by a Member of the Council as its representative.

*Alternate:* any person designated by a Member of the Council to act in the place of the councillor.

*Adviser:* any person who advises or assists a councillor at the meetings.

*Observer:* any person representing the United Nations Organization or one of its specialized agencies at a session of the Council. \*)

*Observer Member:* a Member of the Union not on the Council which has sent a single observer designated to attend a Council session. \*\*)

*Observer designated by an Observer Member:* any person designated by a Member of the Union not a Member of the Council. \*\*)

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\*) *Note by the General Secretariat:* In all provisions of these Rules of Procedure, any reference to the term "observer(s)" without further qualification means the persons covered by this definition.

\*\*) *Note by the General Secretariat:* This definition stems from the application of Resolution 10 (Kyoto, 1994). Accordingly, all provisions of these Rules of Procedure which refer to this type of observer apply provisionally until the 1998 Plenipotentiary Conference.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **SESSIONS**

#### **RULE 1**

##### **Convening of ordinary sessions**

1. The Secretary-General shall, not less than two months in advance, remind the Members of the Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the opening date of the session decided upon during the previous session.
2. The Secretary-General shall, not less than two months in advance, inform every Member of the Union not a Member of the Council of the opening date of the session so as to enable it to communicate the name of the observer it designates to attend the Council.

#### **RULE 2**

##### **Convening of extraordinary sessions**

1. In the case of an emergency which comes to his notice, or which is drawn to his attention by at least four of the Members of the Council or by the Secretary-General, the Chairman shall consult the Members of the Council on the advisability of convening an extraordinary session.
2. If, as a result of such a consultation or in application of the relevant provisions of the Convention, the Chairman decides to convene the Council, he shall inform the Secretary-General, who shall notify the Members of the Council, the other Members of the Union and the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the meeting place, the opening date and the proposed agenda.

3. Following an ordinary Plenipotentiary Conference at which the new Members of the Council have been elected, the new Council shall hold an extraordinary session to elect its Chairman and Vice-Chairman and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the standing committees and to take decisions on any urgent matters.

### RULE 3

#### **Consultations and decisions between sessions**

1. Between sessions, Councillors may consult each other by correspondence:

- either informally,
- or in an organized manner, through the offices of the Chairman or, if the Chairman is not available, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, with the assistance of the Secretary-General.

2. Although the Council shall, as a general rule, make decisions only in session, it may exceptionally agree in session that any specific issue shall be decided upon by correspondence between sessions, such correspondence to be carried out through the offices of the Chairman or, if the Chairman is not available, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, with the assistance of the Secretary-General.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **AGENDA**

#### **RULE 4**

##### **Establishment of the draft agenda of ordinary sessions**

1. As soon as possible after the session the Secretary-General shall send to Members of the Council and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations a preliminary draft agenda for the next session.
2. The following shall be included in the preliminary draft agenda:
  - a)* the draft annual reports on the activities of the Union;
  - b)* the draft biennial or annual budget, as appropriate, the accounts of the Union and the financial operating report;
  - c)* items approved for inclusion by a previous session of the Council;
  - d)* items which the Secretary-General deems it necessary to submit to the Council.
3. Before the session, the Secretary-General shall prepare a final draft agenda, which shall also contain any further items proposed by Members of the Union, by a conference or Sector of the Union, by the United Nations Organization or by one of its specialized agencies and communicated to him at least eight weeks before the opening of the session.

RULE 5

**Approval of the agenda**

1. The Council shall approve the agenda before beginning to discuss the items on it.
2. However, in the course of the session, councillors and the Secretary-General may propose the addition to the agenda of matters considered urgent or important.

**CHAPTER III**  
**PARTICIPATION**

RULE 6

**Representatives of Members of the Council**

1. The person appointed as a councillor shall be accredited by his administration by a letter or telegram addressed to the Secretary-General.
2. Each Member of the Council may designate one or more persons as alternate to act in the place of the Councillor.
3. A Councillor may be accompanied at any meeting by one or more advisers, who may participate in the deliberations.

RULE 7

**Observers and Observer Members**

1. The Council may invite a specialized agency of the United Nations Organization to be represented at meetings at which matters of common interest are to be discussed.
2. Observers may take part in the debates but shall not have the right to vote.
3. Observers designated by Observer Members shall have neither the right to vote nor the right to speak.

## RULE 8

### **Meetings reserved for councillors only**

1. Exceptionally, the Council may hold plenary or committee meetings reserved for councillors only, in the following circumstances:
  - a)* on a ruling from the chairman of the meeting in question;
  - b)* on the proposal of a councillor, supported by at least two other councillors.
2. Councillors may be accompanied by their alternates and advisers when they attend the meetings mentioned above.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ORGANIZATION**

#### **RULE 9**

##### **Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

1. The first meeting of each annual session of the Council shall be opened by the retiring Chairman. In his absence, the first meeting shall be opened by the retiring Vice-Chairman or, in his absence, by the oldest councillor.
2. The Council shall, at the first meeting of each annual session and taking into account the principle of rotation between the regions, elect from among the councillors a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman, who shall take office immediately, shall remain in office until the election of their successors at the first meeting of its next annual session and shall not be eligible for re-election to the same office.
3. If, during a plenary meeting, both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent, the oldest councillor shall act as Chairman.

#### **RULE 10**

##### **Duties of the Chairman**

The Chairman shall organize the work of the Council during the sessions. In the interval between sessions, he may be called upon to take the necessary measures for the convening of extraordinary sessions or for the holding of consultations and the taking of decisions, in accordance with Rule 3 of the present Rules of Procedure. The Vice-Chairman shall serve as Chairman in the absence or non-availability of the latter.

## RULE 11

### **Committees and Working Groups**

The Council may set up committees and working groups, in the work of which all councillors, their advisers and the observers shall be entitled to take part. During Council sessions, one standing committee shall consider staff matters, and another standing committee shall consider financial matters. Observers designated by Observer Members shall be admitted to the meetings of all such committees and working groups under the conditions laid down in paragraph 3 of Rule 7.

## RULE 12

### **Organization of the work of the Council**

1. Each ordinary session of the Council shall begin with an inaugural plenary meeting, during which the Council shall settle organizational matters, such as the election of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, the adoption of its agenda and allocation of documents.
2. The standing committees shall meet immediately after the inaugural plenary meeting, for a length of time decided by the inaugural plenary meeting in the light of the previous Council's recommendations.
3. The Council shall meet in plenary the following week, for a length of time decided by the inaugural plenary meeting in the light of the previous Council's recommendations.
4. The standing committees shall consider the documents allocated to them by the inaugural plenary meeting, such as the reports by the Secretary-General and the Directors of the Bureaux, the draft budget, the annual report to the Members of the Union, and contributions by Members of the Council, as well as contributions submitted by other Members of the Union where the Council has requested such contributions. The standing committees shall prepare draft resolutions and draft decisions and, where necessary, shall prepare reports for consideration by the plenary meeting of the Council. Working groups shall submit their conclusions to the bodies by which they were established, except if it is decided otherwise.

5. The standing committees and working groups shall make every effort to achieve a consensus on the matters submitted to them for consideration; failing this, the chairman of the standing committee or working group in question shall prepare, for consideration by the plenary, a brief report setting out the views expressed by the various participants.

6. Standing committees shall not meet during a plenary meeting nor hold meetings in parallel.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY RECORDS AND REPORTS

#### RULE 13

##### **Summary records of meetings**

1. The summary records of plenary meetings and meetings of the standing committees shall be drawn up in concise form by the secretariat of the Council.
2. However, any councillor and any observer shall have the right to request that a statement he has made be annexed to the summary record, in which case he shall hand in the summarized text thereof to the secretariat of the Council within 24 hours after the end of the meeting.
3.
  - a) Provisional summary records shall be distributed as soon as possible after the close of meetings, and within a period of 48 hours any councillor or observer shall have the right to hand in to the secretariat in writing any amendments which he wishes to be made.
  - b) Provisional summary records which are not available before the end of the session shall be sent to all councillors and observers, who shall have the right to forward amendments to the secretariat within a period of four weeks.
4.
  - a) Revised summary records containing all amendments requested shall be submitted as soon as possible to the plenary meeting or standing committee concerned for approval.
  - b) Revised summary records which the Council has been unable to examine before the end of the session shall be examined and approved by the Chairman of the Council or of the appropriate standing committee.

## RULE 14

### **Resolutions and Decisions**

1. The conclusions of the plenary meeting in respect of matters which it has considered itself, of draft resolutions and draft decisions and of reports transmitted to it by committees or working groups shall be embodied in resolutions and decisions.
2. Any resolution or decision which has been adopted by the Council may not be reconsidered at the same session, unless the majority of the councillors decide otherwise in plenary meeting.
3. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council shall be published by the Secretary-General in accordance with normal procedure.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**CONDUCT OF DEBATES**

RULE 15

**Order of discussion**

1. No one may speak without having first obtained the consent of the chairman.
2. Any person recognized by the chairman must express himself slowly and distinctly, separating his words and pausing frequently so that all his colleagues may be able to follow his meaning clearly, in view of the need for interpretation into other languages.
3. Councillors and elected officials participating in meetings shall discipline themselves to restrict the length and number of their interventions on any one subject.
4. Any original proposal or amendment to a proposal submitted orally or in writing must contain the proposed text in precise terms.

RULE 16

**Proposals involving expenditure**

Before a proposal which involves expenditure for the Union is approved by the plenary meeting, the Secretary-General shall prepare and circulate, as early as possible, a separate estimate of the cost involved in the proposal. It shall be the duty of the chairman to draw the attention of the plenary meeting to this estimate so that it may be taken into account when the proposal is examined.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **VOTING**

#### **RULE 17**

##### **Quorum**

1. A telegram of reminder shall be sent to each Member of the Council which is not represented at the opening of the session.
2. For a valid vote to be taken at the plenary meeting, at least two thirds (2/3) of the Members of the Council having the right to vote must be represented at the meeting.

#### **RULE 18**

##### **Right to vote**

1. The vote to which each Member of the Council is entitled, in accordance with the Constitution and Convention, may be cast only by the person duly accredited to serve on the Council as councillor, alternate or adviser.
2. Voting by proxy is not allowed in the Council.

## RULE 19

### **Voting procedure**

1. As a general rule, the Council, in plenary meeting, shall endeavour to reach coordinated decisions which take into account the views expressed by all the councillors so that it is unnecessary to take a vote.
2. If, however, agreement is not reached in plenary meeting on the whole of the proposals and amendments, a vote shall be taken, the results of which shall be recorded in the summary record.
3.
  - a) Voting shall normally take place by a show of hands.
  - b) At the request of one or more of the councillors present, a roll-call vote shall be taken, in the alphabetical order of the French names of the Members of the Council.
  - c) At the request of a councillor, supported by at least two other councillors, voting shall be by secret ballot. The necessary steps shall then be taken to ensure the secrecy of the vote.
4. The decisions of the Council, in plenary meeting, shall be taken by a majority of councillors voting. However, no proposal or amendment shall be adopted unless it is voted for by at least half of the councillors present and entitled to vote. In case of a tie, the measure shall be considered rejected. In computing a majority, abstentions shall not be taken into account.
5. If the number of abstentions exceeds one half of the number of councillors voting (for, against or abstaining), the measure shall be reconsidered at a subsequent meeting, at which time abstentions shall not be taken into account.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **DOCUMENTS**

#### **RULE 20**

##### **Preparation of documents**

1. The documents of each session of the Council shall be prepared under the direction of the Secretary-General.

They shall comprise:

- a)* documents distributed for the use of the Council;
- b)* summary records of plenary meetings and meetings of the standing committees and reports of committees or working groups.

2. Councillors should be mentioned by name wherever appropriate when the documents referred to at 1.*a*) and 1.*b*) above are being prepared.

3. A preparatory document shall be prepared on each item on the draft agenda of an ordinary or extraordinary session and shall be sent to Members of the Council and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations as soon as possible and, in principle, not later than four weeks before the opening of the session. Any important document issued after this time limit will be examined at the next session of the Council, unless the Council decides otherwise.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Rule, documents having serious financial implications or relating to staff or organizational matters shall, whenever possible, reach Members of the Council not less than two months before the opening of the session.

5. If, in exceptional circumstances, the Secretary-General considers it unavoidable to present to the Council a draft budget in excess of the limits prescribed in the relevant decisions of the Plenipotentiary Conference, he shall clearly identify, in an annex to this draft, the items for which the limit is exceeded, justify them and offer options which, if adopted, would bring the budget within the limits.

## RULE 21

### **Free distribution of documents**

1. As soon as possible after each session of the Council, the Secretary-General shall send, free of charge, to the Members of the Union and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, one copy of the following documents:

- a) the summary records of the plenary meetings and meetings of the standing committees,
- b) such documents as the Council considers it necessary to communicate in support of the summary records,
- c) the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council.

2. Councillors and other participants in the Council shall receive the documents they require.

3. Observers designated by Observer Members who are present at the venue of the Council session shall receive a copy of the documents distributed to the Members of the Council.

## RULE 22

### **Press releases**

Press releases concerning the work of the Council shall be drafted by the Secretary-General and issued to the press on the authority of the Chairman or of the Vice-Chairman.

