

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COUNCIL

**of the International
Telecommunication Union
(2007 Edition)**

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International
Telecommunication
Union

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RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COUNCIL

Preamble

1. The present Rules of Procedure of the Council (hereinafter referred to as the “Rules”), adopted in pursuance of No. 61B of the Convention of the International Telecommunication Union (hereinafter referred to as the “Convention”), shall enter into force on 15 September 2007.
2. Those provisions of the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union (hereinafter referred to as the “Constitution”) and of 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 General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union shall be applied.

Definitions

Member State of the Council: one of the Member States of the Union elected to the Council by a plenipotentiary conference.

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

Alternate: any person designated by a Member State 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 State: a Member State 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 State: any person designated by a Member State of the Union not a Member State of the Council.

Observer Sector Member: a Sector Member of the Union which has sent a single observer designated to attend a Council session.

Observer designated by an observer Sector Member: any person designated by an observer Sector Member.

CHAPTER I

SESSIONS

RULE 1

Convening of ordinary sessions

1. The Secretary-General shall, not less than two months in advance, remind the Member States 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 State of the Union not a Member State 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 Member States of the Council or by the Secretary-General, the chairman shall consult the Member States 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 Member States of the Council, the other Member States 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 Member States of the Council have been elected, the new Council shall hold an extraordinary session to elect its chairman and vice-chairman and the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Standing Committee on Administration and Management 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 Member States 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 Member States 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 Member States of the Council

1. The person appointed as a councillor shall be accredited by his administration by a letter or fax addressed to the Secretary-General.
2. Each Member State 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, observer Member States and observer Sector Members

1. The Secretary-General 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 Member States shall not have the right to vote. They may speak in accordance with Rule 11 of the present Rules under the following conditions:

- a)* They must have previously signalled to the secretariat their wish to speak on particular items of the agenda or to introduce their written contribution;
- b)* The floor will be given only after the Member States of the Council have finished making their statements;
- c)* They will be entitled to speak only once on any given agenda item;
- d)* The duration of such statements will be limited according to the number of requests made and the total amount of time allocated with respect to the work to be accomplished.

4. Observer Sector Members shall have neither the right to vote nor to submit contributions, whether written or oral.

RULE 8

Meetings reserved for councillors only

1. Exceptionally, the Council may hold plenary, committee or working group 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.

RULE 10

Duties of the chairman

1. 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. The vice-chairman shall serve as chairman in the absence or non-availability of the latter.
2. If, during a plenary meeting, both the chairman and the vice-chairman are absent, the oldest councillor shall act as chairman.

RULE 11

Committees and working groups

1. The Council may set up committees and working groups, in the work of which all councillors, their alternates and advisers, and the observers shall be entitled to take part. During Council sessions, a standing committee on administration and management of the Union shall consider staff matters and financial matters. Observers designated by observer Member States shall be admitted to the meetings of all such committees and working groups under the conditions laid down in paragraph 3 of Rule 7. Observer Sector Members may attend the meetings of all such committees and working groups under the conditions laid down in paragraph 4 of Rule 7. The terms of this paragraph apply without prejudice to Rule 8 above.

2. The steering committee, comprising the Chairman of the Council, who shall be its chairman, the vice-chairman and the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Standing Committee on Administration and Management, shall be responsible for coordinating all activities relating to the smooth running of the Council's work and for drawing up the schedule of meetings. It shall be assisted by the Secretary-General in his capacity as Secretary of the Council.

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 Council shall meet in plenary, for a length of time decided by the inaugural plenary meeting in the light of the previous Council's recommendations.

3. The standing committee shall meet, in principle, 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.

4. The standing committee shall consider the documents allocated to it 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 Member States of the Union, and contributions by Member States of the Council, as well as contributions submitted by other Member States of the Union. The standing committee shall prepare draft resolutions and draft decisions and shall prepare a report 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 committee 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 shall include, in the report drawn up, the views expressed by the various participants.

6. The standing committee shall not meet during a plenary meeting.

7. Subject to Rule 8 of the present Rules, the debates of plenary meetings and of the standing committee shall be broadcast via the Internet for the benefit of Member States and Sector Members.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY RECORDS OF MEETINGS

RULE 13

Summary records of meetings

1. The summary records of plenary meetings and meetings of the standing committee shall be drawn up in concise form by the secretariat of the Council.
2. However, any councillor, observer or, as the case may be, observer designated by an observer Member State 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, observer or, as the case may be, observer designated by an observer Member State 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, observers and, as the case may be, observers designated by observer Member States, 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 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 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. Alternatively, Council may decide that a specific decision be recorded in the summary record of the plenary meeting in which it was adopted.

2. Any decision which has been taken 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, elected officials and, subject to Rule 7 above, observers and observers designated by observer Member States participating in meetings shall make every effort 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 reminder shall be sent by fax or by electronic means to each Member State 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 Member States 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 State 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 and entitled to vote, a rollcall vote shall be taken, in the alphabetical order of the French names of the Member States of the Council.

c) At the request of a councillor entitled to vote, supported by at least two other councillors entitled to vote, 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 votes cast (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

DOCUMENTATION

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 committee 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 published on each item on the draft agenda of an ordinary or extraordinary session, 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, be published 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 Member States of the Union, one copy of the following documents:

- a)* the summary records of the plenary meetings and meetings of the standing committee,
- 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 Member States who are present at the venue of the Council session shall receive a copy of the documents distributed to the Member States 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.



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