

**53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**

*Bonn, Germany, 19 – 20 October 2022*

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**RULES OF PROCEDURE**

*(As at 1 September / Prepared by the Secretariat)*

Summary:

The document contains the Rules of Procedure as adopted by the Standing Committee at its 46<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Amendments are proposed to address a number of inconsistencies and provisions that would benefit from clarification and to adapt several rules in case a meeting is hosted virtually.

## RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

(as adopted at ~~StC46~~ StC53)

### Rule 1: Officers

1. At the first meeting of the Committee following each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Members of the Committee shall elect its Chair and Vice-Chair from among ~~the Members~~ themselves. The Executive Secretary will preside over the elections.
2. In an election to fill one place, if no candidate obtains an overall majority in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be taken, restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes overall. If in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the Presiding Officer shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.
3. If in the first ballot there is a tie among candidates obtaining the second largest number of votes, a special ballot shall be held amongst them for reducing the total number of candidates to two.
4. In the case of a tie among three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes in the first ballot, a special ballot shall be held among them for reducing the number of candidates to two. If a tie then results among two or more candidates, the Presiding Officer shall reduce the number to two by drawing lots, and a further ballot shall be held in accordance with Rule 1 (2).
5. The Chair shall participate in meetings of the Committee in that capacity and shall not at the same time exercise the rights of a ~~geographic~~ member. The Member concerned shall designate another representative to represent the Member in the meeting and exercise the right to vote.
6. The Chair shall: preside at meetings of the Committee; approve for circulation the provisional agenda prepared by the Secretariat; and maintain liaison with other committees and with the Scientific Council between meetings of the Committee. The Chair may represent the Committee and the Conference of the Parties as required within the limits of the Committee's mandate, and shall carry out such other functions as may be entrusted by the Committee.
7. The Vice-Chair shall assist in the execution of the Chair's functions, shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair, and, if the Chair resigns during their term of office, shall assume the Chair.
8. If the Vice-Chair assumes the role of Chair or resigns during his/her term, the Members of the Committee shall elect a new Vice-Chair from among ~~their number~~ themselves to serve out the remainder of the term.
9. If a geographic Member resigns from the Committee, the Alternate Member shall assume that role and the Secretariat shall organize the election of a replacement Alternate from among the Parties of the region concerned to serve the remainder of the term.

### Rule 2: Observers

1. The United Nations, its Specialized Agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency, any Party that is not a member of the Standing Committee, as well as any State not a Party to the Convention or any observer admitted to the COP immediately preceding the meeting of the Committee, after advising the Secretariat of their intention to attend, is able to observe a meeting of the Committee at their own expense.

2. ~~Any other agency or body that~~ Any body or agency that is not a member of the Committee and wishes to observe a meeting shall submit a request to the Secretariat at least 30 days before the meeting, or in the case of an emergency meeting, at least seven days before that meeting, and shall provide, for approval by the Secretariat: Any such request from a body or agency shall be accompanied by:
- a) Relevant information with regard to its technical qualifications;
  - b) Name/s of the observer/s who have been authorized to represent it at the meeting; and
  - c) Confirmation that, if accepted, the observer will meet their own expenses.
3. ~~The Secretariat shall forward each request received and relevant information to the Chair and the members of the Committee for approval.~~

### Rule 3: Meetings

1. The Committee shall normally meet at least once every year.
2. Extraordinary meetings of the Committee shall be called at the request of the Chair or at least three Members.
3. The Secretariat shall, in consultation with the Chair and members of the Standing Committee, propose the time, and place of meetings, including online meetings. The time and place of meetings shall be determined by the Chair, in consultation with members of the Standing Committee and the Secretariat.
4. Notice of meetings to all Parties including the time and venue, shall be given by the Secretariat at least 75 days and, in the case of emergency meetings, at least 14 days in advance of the meeting.
5. The Committee shall decide on the working languages for its meetings, which shall in any case have simultaneous interpretation into the working languages of the Convention.
6. Documents to be considered at an ordinary meeting shall normally be provided to the Secretariat in one of the languages of the Convention at least 60 days before the meeting where they are to be discussed, and should desirably not be longer than 12 pages. Documents to be considered at an extraordinary meeting shall normally be provided to the Secretariat in one of the languages of the Convention at least 10 days before the meeting.
7. The Secretariat shall place on its website, in the language in which they have been received, all documents submitted by any Party, or documents submitted by an observer and approved for publication on the website by the Chair, at least 45 days, and in the case of emergency meetings at least 7 days before each meeting of the Standing Committee.
8. The Secretariat shall post all documents for the meeting on its website, which shall be translated into the three working languages of the Convention, at least 40 days, and in the case of an emergency meeting at least 7 days as soon as possible before each meeting of the Standing Committee.
9. A quorum for a meeting shall consist of five Members of the Committee from at least three regions. No decision shall be taken at a meeting in the absence of a quorum.
10. In the case of online meetings, if a Member steps away from the meeting while leaving the device connected, they will be considered present in the meeting and count toward the quorum. If a Member is unwillingly disconnected for technical reasons, they should immediately alert the Secretariat (contact information will be provided in advance of the meeting) by an alternative means of communication, and a technical solution should be found as soon as

possible; the meeting will not be disrupted. A Member who was unwillingly disconnected from the meeting during adoption of decisions by the Standing Committee will ask the Chair for the opportunity to express their views when they reconnect again. If two or more Members are disconnected from the meeting for technical reasons, the Chair may decide to adjourn the session until the matter is resolved. If neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair are connected to the meeting, the members of the Standing Committee may choose a Chair and Vice-Chair amongst their members who are connected

11. The Chair shall, as a general rule, call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak and shall give precedence to the Members of the Committee. Amongst observers, precedence shall be given to representatives of Parties, non-Party States, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations, in this order. However, the Chair may depart from this general rule and call on speakers in the order that he/she judges appropriate to ensure the timely progress of the debate.
12. Participants shall speak only if called upon by the Chair, who may call a speaker to order if his/her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
13. The Committee may, on a proposal by the Chair or by a Member, limit the time to be allowed to each speaker and the number of times the members of a delegation or the observers may speak on any question. When the debate is subject to such limits, and a speaker has spoken for his/her allotted time, the Chair shall call him/her to order without delay.
14. During the course of a debate the Chair may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Committee, declare the list closed. The Chair may accord the right of reply to any participant if an intervention delivered after he/she has declared the list closed makes this desirable.
15. Decisions of the Committee shall be taken by consensus unless a vote is requested by the Chair or by three Members.
16. Only Members of the Committee may vote. Each Member shall have one vote which is to be exercised by a nominated delegate of that Member.
17. Decisions of the Committee by means of a vote on procedural matters relating to forwarding the business of the Committee shall be taken by a simple majority of the Members present and voting. In the case of a tie, the motion shall be considered as rejected. ~~and e~~On other matters decisions shall be taken by a majority of two thirds of the votes cast. ~~In the case of a tie, the motion shall be considered as rejected.~~
18. In case of a vote during an online meeting, the Chair will call Members one by one in the order decided by the Chair. They will express their vote by orally stating yes, no, or abstain. In the event of such a roll-call vote, should any Member fail to cast a vote for any reason during the roll call, they shall be called upon a second time after the conclusion of the initial roll call. Should the Member fail to cast a vote on the second roll call, they shall be recorded as absent.
19. A draft summary report of each meeting shall be prepared by the Secretariat and sent to the Parties represented at the meeting in all three working languages within ~~60~~ 90 days of the end of the meeting. The summary report shall indicate the decision that was made with regard to each agenda item. The Secretariat shall take into account any comments received within 20 days of the circulation and shall communicate the final summary report to all Parties after it is approved by the Chair. Any comments or views expressed in the chat during an online meeting will not be included in the meeting report unless such comments have been read aloud during the plenary sessions.

**Rule 4: Subsidiary Bodies**

1. The Committee may establish sub-committees and inter-sessional working groups to progress its business. Elections of officers of and any votes taken at such sub-committees and working groups should be conducted in accordance with these Rules of Procedure.

**Rule 5: Communication Procedure**

1. Any Member or the Secretariat may inform the Chair of their intention to make a proposal ~~may make a proposal to the Chair~~ for a decision by postal procedure (i.e. by means of documents with a signature - letters, faxes or scanned e-mail attachments) or other verifiable electronic means. The Secretariat shall communicate the proposal to the Members who shall comment within 30 days in the three working languages of the Convention and all comments will be circulated to members of the Committee.
2. If no objection to a proposal is received by the Secretariat by the date when the comments on the proposal were due to be communicated, the proposal shall be considered as adopted, and notice of the adoption shall be given to all Members.
3. If any Member objects to a proposal within the applicable time limit, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

**Rule 6: Final Provisions**

1. These Rules shall come into force on adoption by the Committee by consensus and shall remain valid for each of its meetings unless amended ~~by decision of the Committee~~ by consensus ~~or by a Resolution of the COP~~.
2. In matters not covered by the present Rules, the Rules of Procedure as adopted by the preceding ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties shall be applied *mutatis mutandis*.
3. In accordance with decisions of the Conference of the Parties, funding may be made available for the Chair, Vice Chair and one representative of each member of the Committee eligible for funding to participate in the work of the ~~attend the meetings of the~~ Committee.