



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

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Second Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts Aimed at Finalizing a Draft Declaration on Universal Norms on Bioethics

UNESCO Headquarters, 20-24 June 2005
(Room XI, Fontenoy building)

RULES OF PROCEDURE

(As adopted at the first intergovernmental meeting of experts on 4 April 2005)

I. PARTICIPATION

Rule 1 – Chief participants

Experts representing the governments of the Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO invited by the Director-General in accordance with the decision of the Executive Board of UNESCO (170 EX/Dec. 3.5.1) may participate in the Meeting with the right to vote.

Rule 2 – Observers

- 2.1 States not Members of UNESCO, but members of at least one other organization of the United Nations system, and Palestine, may participate in the Meeting as observers, without the right to vote.
- 2.2 The United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system with which UNESCO has concluded mutual representation agreements may participate in the Meeting as observers, without the right to vote.
- 2.3 International intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations invited to the Meeting by the Director-General of UNESCO in accordance with the decision of the Executive Board (170 EX/Dec. 3.5.1) may participate in the Meeting as observers, without the right to vote.
- 2.4 Bodies which may contribute to the work of the Meeting, such as national ethics committees and concerned professional associations invited to the Meeting by the Director-General of UNESCO in accordance with the decision of the Executive Board (170 EX/Dec. 3.5.1) may send observers.
- 2.5 Subject to the provisions of Rule 9.3, representatives and observers may take part in the Meeting's discussions, but without the right to vote.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE MEETING

Rule 3 – Agenda

- 3.1 The provisional agenda of the Meeting shall be established by the Director-General of UNESCO.
- 3.2 The Meeting shall adopt the agenda at the beginning of its first plenary meeting.

Rule 4 – Bureau

- 4.1 At the beginning of its first plenary meeting, the Meeting shall elect a Chairperson, four Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur, who will constitute its Bureau.
- 4.2 The Bureau shall be responsible for co-ordinating the work of the Meeting and of its subsidiary bodies, for setting the dates, times and agendas of its meetings and in general for assisting the Chairperson in carrying out his/her duties.

Rule 5 – Duties of the Chairperson

- 5.1 In addition to exercising the powers which are conferred upon him/her under any other provisions of these Rules, the Chairperson shall open and close each plenary session of the Meeting. He/she shall direct the discussions, ensure observance of these Rules of Procedure, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. He/she shall rule on points of order and, subject to the present Rules, shall control the proceedings of each session and ensure the maintenance of order. He/she shall not vote, but may instruct another expert from his/her delegation to vote in his/her place.
- 5.2 If the Chairperson ceases to represent a chief participant or finds himself/herself unable to exercise his/her role, one of the Vice-Chairpersons shall take the chair until the end of the Meeting. If that Vice-Chairperson ceases in turn to represent a chief participant, one of the other Vice-Chairpersons shall take the chair until the end of the Meeting.
- 5.3 Should the Chairperson find it necessary to be absent during a session or any part thereof, his/her place shall be taken by one of the Vice-Chairpersons, who, acting as Chairperson, shall have the same power and duties as the Chairperson.
- 5.4 The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson of a subsidiary body of the Meeting shall have the same duties with regard to the body over which they are called upon to preside as the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons.

Rule 6 – Subsidiary bodies

- 6.1 Subject to the availability of technical facilities, the Meeting may establish such subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary for the conduct of its work.
- 6.2 Any subsidiary body so established shall elect its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, and, if necessary, the Rapporteur.
- 6.3 These Rules of Procedures shall apply mutatis mutandis to the Chairperson and to the debates of the subsidiary bodies, unless otherwise decided by the Meeting.

III. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 7 – Public character of meetings

All plenary sessions shall be held in public, unless the Meeting decides otherwise.

Rule 8 – Quorum

- 8.1 At plenary sessions, a majority of the chief participants attending the Meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- 8.2 At the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Meeting, the quorum shall be constituted by majority of chief participants in each subsidiary body.

Rule 9 – Order of speakers and time-limit on speeches

- 9.1 The Chairperson shall call upon participants in the order in which they signify their wish to speak.
- 9.2 To facilitate the conduct of business, the Chairperson may limit the time to be allowed to each speaker.
- 9.3 Observers referred to in Rule 2 may speak with the prior consent of the Chairperson.

Rule 10 – Points of order

- 10.1 In the course of a debate on any topic, a chief participant may raise a point of order, on which the Chairperson shall immediately give a ruling.
- 10.2 An appeal may be made against the ruling of the Chairperson. Such appeal shall be put to the vote immediately, and the Chairperson's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of chief participants present and voting.

Rule 11 – Procedural motions

- 11.1 A chief participant may, at any time, move the suspension or adjournment of the session, or the adjournment or closure of the debate.
- 11.2 The motions referred to in Rule 11.1 shall be put to the vote immediately. Such motions shall have precedence in the following order:
 - (a) to suspend the session;
 - (b) to adjourn the session;
 - (c) to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;
 - (d) to close the debate on the item under discussion.

Rule 12 – Working languages

- 12.1 The working languages of the Meeting shall be English and French.
- 12.2 Statements made to the Meeting in one of the working languages shall be interpreted into the other languages.
- 12.3 The documents of the Meeting shall be issued in English and French.

Rule 13 – Vote

- 13.1 Each Member State, invited as chief participant, shall have one vote in the Meeting and in the subsidiary bodies on which they are represented, whatever the number of its representatives.
- 13.2 Subject to the provisions of Rules 16 and 17, the decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of the chief participants present and voting. Nevertheless, in all matters, participants shall endeavour to take decisions by consensus.
- 13.3 For the purpose of these Rules, the expression 'chief participants present and voting' shall mean chief participants casting an affirmative or negative vote. Chief participants abstaining from voting shall be considered as not voting.
- 13.4 Voting shall normally be by show of hands.
- 13.5 When the result of a vote by show of hands is in doubt, the Chairperson may take a second vote, by roll-call. A vote by roll-call shall also be taken if it is requested by no fewer than two chief participants before the voting takes place. When a roll-call vote is taken, the vote or abstention of each chief participant shall be recorded in the report.
- 13.6 When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Meeting shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be furthest removed in substance from the original proposal. It shall then vote on the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be next furthest removed therefrom, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote.
- 13.7 If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon as a whole.
- 13.8 A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.
- 13.9 For all elections, the vote shall be conducted by secret ballot, unless the Meeting decides otherwise if no objection is made.
- 13.10 In the case of a tie in non-electoral votes, the motion shall be deemed rejected.

IV. SECRETARIAT OF THE MEETING

Rule 14 – Secretariat

- 14.1 The Director-General of UNESCO or his representatives shall participate in the work of the Meeting without the right to vote. He/she may at any time make either oral or written statements to the Meeting or to any of its subsidiary bodies on any question under consideration.
- 14.2 The Director-General of UNESCO shall appoint officials of UNESCO to constitute the Secretariat of the Meeting.
- 14.3 The Secretariat shall receive, translate and distribute all official documents of the Meeting and ensure the interpretation of the discussions, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 12 of these Rules of Procedure. It shall also perform any other duties necessary for the proper conduct of the work of the Meeting or of its subsidiary bodies.

V. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rule 15 – Adoption

The Meeting shall adopt its Rules of Procedure by a decision taken in plenary session by a simple majority of chief participants present and voting.

Rule 16 – Amendment

The Meeting may amend these Rules of Procedure by a decision taken in plenary session by a two-thirds majority of the chief participants present and voting.

Rule 17 – Suspension

The application of an article of these Rules of procedures can not be suspended except by a majority decision of two-thirds of the chief participants present and voting.