



Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme

Rules of Procedure

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**Article 3
of the Statutes**

I. Sessions

1. Date and place

- (a) The Council shall hold ordinary sessions at least once and not more than twice every two years.
- (b) During the first three years of existence of the Information for All Programme, the Council should meet every year.
- (c) The first ordinary session of the Council shall be convened by the Director-General of UNESCO. The place and date of that session shall be communicated in advance to all States, members of the Council.
- (d) Other ordinary sessions shall be convened by the Secretariat of the Council in accordance with the instructions of the Bureau of the Council.
- (e) The Council shall normally meet at the Headquarters of UNESCO. It may meet elsewhere if so decided by a majority of the members, subject to the availability of adequate resources.
- (f) Extraordinary sessions shall be convened by decision of the Council itself, or at the request of thirteen of its members. The place and date of extraordinary sessions shall be determined by the Chairperson, in consultation with the Director-General, unless these have been decided upon by the Council.

2. Provisional agenda

- (a) The provisional agenda of the first session of the Council shall be prepared by the Director-General of UNESCO.
- (b) The provisional agenda of the following sessions of the Council shall be prepared by the Secretariat of the Council in consultation with the members of the Bureau.
- (c) The provisional agenda shall be communicated to the members of the Council at least two months before the opening of each session.
- (d) The provisional agenda shall be communicated also to Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO, which are not members of the Council, to the organizations of the United Nations system with which UNESCO has concluded mutual representation agreements, and to the non-governmental organizations and foundations selected according to the criteria and conditions established by the Council.
- (e) The provisional agenda of a session of the Council shall include:
 - all items the inclusion of which has been decided upon by the Council;
 - all items proposed by States, members of the Council;

- all items proposed by the organizations of the United Nations system with which UNESCO has concluded mutual representation agreements;
- all items proposed by the Director-General of UNESCO;
- all items emanating from decisions of the Executive Board and the General Conference of UNESCO .

3. Adoption of the agenda

At the beginning of each session, the Council shall adopt the agenda for that session.

4. Amendments, deletion and new items

The Council may, during a session, modify the order of items on the agenda or add or delete such items. A majority of two-thirds shall be required for the addition or deletion of any item on the adopted agenda.

II. **Officers**

Article 6 of the Statutes

5. Election of the Bureau

(a) At the beginning of the first session, following a session of the General Conference at which elections for the Council were held, the Council shall elect a Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons, a Rapporteur and three other members taking into consideration the geographic balance of the group; these shall form the Council's Bureau. The members of the Bureau who are representatives of Member States of UNESCO shall remain in office until a new Bureau has been elected.

(b) Members of the Bureau are eligible for re-election.

6. General powers of the Chairperson

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him/her elsewhere by these Rules, the Chairperson shall have the following powers: he/she shall declare the opening and closing of meetings, direct the discussions, ensure observance of these Rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions; he/she shall rule on points of order and, subject to these Rules, shall control the proceedings and the maintenance of order.

7. Replacement of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons or Rapporteur

- (a) If the Chairperson ceases to represent a State, member of the Council or is so incapacitated that he/she can no longer hold office, the Bureau shall designate a Vice-Chairperson to serve as Temporary Chairperson for the unexpired portion of the term of office. If that Vice-Chairperson also ceases to represent a State, member of the Council or is so incapacitated that he/she can no longer hold office, another Vice-Chairperson shall be designated as Temporary Chairperson for the unexpired portion of the term of office.
- (b) In the absence of the Chairperson during a session or any part thereof, his/her functions shall be exercised by one of the three Vice-Chairperson appointed by the Chairperson to take his/her place.
- (c) If the State, member of the Council whose representative is the Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson or the Rapporteur replaces that representative, the Council shall elect a new incumbent to that office.

III. Observers

Article 7 of the Statutes

8. Participation

In addition to the Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO, which are not members of the Council and representatives of the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system, other international governmental and non-governmental organizations may be invited to participate in the proceedings of the Council without the right to vote. The list of those governmental and non-governmental organizations to be invited will be revised by the Council as appropriate, or by the Bureau once the Council has established the conditions and criteria for such invitations.

9. Conditions

The Council shall lay down the conditions under which other international governmental or non-governmental organizations may be invited to participate in its proceedings without the right to vote. The Council shall also lay down the conditions under which certain particularly well-qualified persons might be consulted on matters within their competence

IV. Working Groups

Article 4 of the Statutes

10. Meetings

- (a) Working Groups set up by the Council shall meet in accordance with the decisions of the Council, or those of the Bureau if the Council delegates authority to it.
- (b) These Working Groups shall elect their own Chairperson, one Vice-Chairperson and, if necessary, their own Rapporteur.

11. Rules of Procedure

These Rules of Procedure shall apply where appropriate to the proceedings of working groups unless the Council decides otherwise.

V. Secretariat

12. Role

- (a) The Director-General of UNESCO or his/her representative shall participate in the work of the Council, without the right to vote.
- (b) The Director-General of UNESCO or his/her representative may at any time submit either oral or written statements to the Council or to any subsidiary body on any question under discussion.
- (c) The Secretary of the Council appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO shall attend all meetings of the Council and Bureau.

VI. Languages

13. Working languages

Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the working languages of the Council. The Council may nevertheless limit the number of working languages for any particular session of the Council without prejudice to the efficient conduct of the meeting.

14. Use of other languages

Any speaker may speak in a language other than the working languages currently in use for a particular session of the Council or a working group on the condition that he/she provides for the interpretation of his/her speech into one or another of the said working languages.

VII. Reports and Documents

15. Reports

Article 10 of the Statutes

The Council shall submit reports on its activities to the General Conference of UNESCO at each of its ordinary sessions.

16. Working documents

In general, the working documents of each session of the Council shall be communicated to the members one month before the opening of each session in the six working languages .

VIII. Meetings

17. Quorum

- (a) A majority of the States, members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.
- (b) At meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Council a quorum shall be constituted by a majority of the States, members of the Council that are members of the body in question.

18. Publicity of meetings

All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public unless the Council decides otherwise.

IX. Conduct of Business

19. Right to speak

Any representative of a State, member of the Council and any observer may, with the authorization of the Chairperson, make oral or written statements before the Council and its working groups.

20. Order of speeches

The Chairperson shall call upon speakers in the order in which they have expressed the desire to speak.

21. Time-limit on speeches

The Council may limit the time to be allowed to each speaker.

22. Points of order

During the discussion on any matter, a representative of a State, member of the Council, may at any time raise a point of order which shall forthwith be decided upon by the Chairperson. Any representative may appeal against the ruling of the Chairperson, which can only be overruled by a majority of the members present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

23. Suspension, adjournment, closure

Any representative of a State, member of the Council may, at any time, propose the suspension or adjournment of a meeting or the adjournment or closure of a debate. Such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately. The order of priority of such motions shall be as follows:

- (a) suspension of the meeting;
- (b) adjournment of the meeting;
- (c) adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion;
- (d) closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

X. Voting

24. Voting rights

Each State, member of the Council, shall have one vote.

25. Simple majority

- (a) Unless otherwise provided in these Rules, decisions shall be taken by a majority of the members present and voting.
- (b) For the purpose of these Rules, the phrase “members present and voting” means members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

26. Show of hands and roll-call

Voting shall normally be by show of hands, except that any member may, before the voting starts, request a roll-call. The vote and abstention of each member participating in a roll-call shall be inserted in the report.

27. Voting on amendments

- (a) When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first.
- (b) When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Council shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be the furthest removed from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest there from and so forth, until all amendments have been put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on. If no amendment is adopted, the proposal shall be put to the vote in its original form.
- (c) A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

28. Secret ballot

All elections shall be decided by secret ballot unless the Council decides otherwise.

29. Equally divided votes

If a vote is equally divided on matters other than elections, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

XI. Special Procedures

30. Special consultation by correspondence

Should the approval of the Council be required for measures of exceptional urgency and importance while the Council is not in session, the Bureau, by means of its Chairperson, may, through the intermediary of the Secretariat, consult the members by correspondence. The proposed measure shall be adopted if it is approved by two-thirds of the members, i.e. by 18 of the 26 members.

**Article 6
of the Statutes**

31. Virtual Council and Bureau meetings

- (a) The Council and the Bureau shall be entitled to hold virtual meetings.
- (b) The Bureau shall develop the Guidelines for virtual meetings. The Council shall adopt these Guidelines

XII. Amendment to the Rules

32. Amendment

These Rules of Procedure, except when they reproduce provisions of the Council Statutes or decisions of the General Conference, may be amended by a decision of the Council taken by a majority of the members present and voting, provided that the proposal for amendment has been placed on the agenda.

33. Suspension

Suspension of any of these Rules shall require a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.