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**WORLD CONFERENCE
of the
UNITED NATIONS
DECADE FOR WOMEN:**

**Equality,
Development
and
Peace**

Copenhagen, Denmark

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ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

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PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE*

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* The provisional rules of procedure contained in the present document are a re-edited version of the rules as amended by the Preparatory Committee for the Conference at its second session (A/CONF.94/PC.7 and A/CONF.94/PC.12). The present version is subject to such amendments as may result from decision 1980/147 adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 23rd plenary meeting, held on 2 May 1980. The decision reads as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council, taking into account General Assembly decision 34/434 of 17 December 1979, decided to authorize the President and the other members of the Bureau of the Council, in consultation with the chairmen of the regional groups, to resolve the outstanding questions relating to the Bureau of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, including the number of vice-presidents, having due regard to the principle of equitable geographical representation."

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I. REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Composition of delegations

Rule 1

Each State participating in the Conference shall be represented by a head of delegation and no more than five other accredited representatives and such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

Alternates and advisers

Rule 2

The head of delegation may designate an alternate representative or an adviser to act as a representative.

Credentials

Rule 3

The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the Secretary-General of the Conference, if possible not less than one week before the date fixed for the opening of the Conference. Any later change in the composition of delegations shall also be submitted to the Secretary-General of the Conference. The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of the State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Credentials Committee

Rule 4

A Credentials Committee of nine members shall be appointed at the beginning of the Conference. Its membership shall, as far as possible, be the same as that of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its thirty-fourth session. It shall examine the credentials of representatives and report to the Conference without delay.

Provisional participation

Rule 5

Pending a decision of the Conference upon their credentials, representatives shall be entitled to participate provisionally in the Conference.

II. OFFICERS

Election 1/

Rule 6

The Conference shall elect the following officers: a President, Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur-General, as well as a Presiding Officer for each of the Main Committees provided for in rule 42. Each Main Committee shall elect three Deputy Presiding Officers and a Rapporteur.

Acting President

Rule 7

1. If the President is to be absent from a meeting or any part thereof, he/she shall designate a Vice-President to take his/her place.
2. A Vice-President acting ^{as} President shall have the powers and duties of the President.

Voting rights of the President 2/

Rule 8

The President, or a Vice-President acting as President, shall not vote, but may appoint another member of his/her delegation to vote in his/her place.

III. GENERAL COMMITTEE

Composition

Rule 9

The President, the Vice-Presidents, the Rapporteur-General of the Conference and the Presiding Officers of the Main Committees established in accordance with rule 42 shall constitute the General Committee. The President of the Conference, or in his/her absence one of the Vice-Presidents designated by him/her, shall serve as Presiding Officer of the General Committee. The Presiding Officer of the Credentials Committee may participate, without the right to vote, in the General Committee.

1/ For the election of officers of the Credentials Committee and of working groups, see rule 44 (a).

2/ For the voting rights of the Presiding Officers of the General and Credentials Committees and of working groups, see rule 44 (b).

Functions

Rule 10

The General Committee shall assist the President in the general conduct of the business of the Conference and, subject to the decisions of the Conference, shall ensure the co-ordination of its work.

IV. SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE

Duties of the Secretary-General

Rule 11

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Conference shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary organs. Either may designate a member of the secretariat to act in his/her place at these meetings.
2. The Secretary-General of the Conference shall direct the staff required by the Conference.

Duties of the secretariat

Rule 12

The secretariat of the Conference shall, in accordance with these rules:

- (a) Provide interpretation of speeches made at meetings;
- (b) Receive, translate and circulate the documents of the Conference;
- (c) Publish and circulate the report of the Conference;
- (d) Make and arrange for the keeping of sound recordings of meetings;
- (e) Arrange for the custody of the documents of the Conference in the archives of the United Nations;
- (f) Generally perform all other work that the Conference may require.

Statements by the secretariat

Rule 13

The Secretary-General of the United Nations or the Secretary-General of the Conference, or any member of the secretariat designated by either for that purpose, may make oral as well as written statements concerning any question under consideration.

V. CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

Report

Rule 14

The Conference shall adopt a report, the draft of which shall be prepared by the Rapporteur-General.

VI. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Quorum 3/

Rule 15

The President may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when representatives of at least one third of the States participating in the Conference are present. The presence of representatives of a majority of the States so participating shall be required for any decision to be taken.

General powers of the President

Rule 16

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him/her elsewhere by these rules, the President shall preside at the plenary meetings of the Conference, declare the opening and closing of each meeting, direct the discussion, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. The President shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules, have complete control of the proceedings and over the maintenance of order thereat. The President may propose to the Conference the closure of the list of speakers, a limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers and of the number of times each representative may speak on any question, the adjournment or the closure of the debate and the suspension or the adjournment of a meeting.

2. The President, in the exercise of his/her functions, remains under the authority of the Conference.

Points of order

Rule 17

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be immediately decided by the President in accordance with these rules. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President.

^{3/} For the quorum required at meetings of committees and working groups, see rule ⁴4 (c).

The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately, and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Speeches

Rule 18

1. No one may address the Conference without having previously obtained the permission of the President. Subject to rules 17, 19 and 21 to 24, the President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak.
2. Debate shall be confined to the question before the Conference and the President may call a speaker to order if his/her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
3. The Conference may limit the time allowed to speakers ^{4/} and the number of times each representative may speak on any question. Permission to speak on a motion to set such limits shall be accorded only to two representatives in favour of and to two opposing such limits, after which the motion shall be put to the vote immediately. In any event, the President shall limit interventions on procedural questions to a maximum of five minutes. When the debate is so limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the President shall call him/her to order without delay.

Precedence

Rule 19

The Presiding Officer or Rapporteur of a committee or working group may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusions arrived at by the committee or working group concerned.

Closing of list of speakers

Rule 20

During the course of a debate the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Conference, declare the list closed. When there are no more speakers on the list, the President shall, with the consent of the Conference, declare the debate closed. Such closure shall have the same effect as closure pursuant to rule 24.

^{4/} The General Assembly decided, in resolution 33/189 of 29 January 1979 (para. 2 (c)), that statements in the general debate, to be held in plenary, should be limited to 15 minutes per speaker.

Right of reply

Rule 21

Notwithstanding rule 20, the President shall accord the right of reply to the representative of any State participating in the Conference who requests it. Any other representative may be granted the opportunity to make a reply. Such statements shall be as brief as possible and shall, as a general rule, be delivered at the end of the last meeting of the day.

Suspension or adjournment of the meeting

Rule 22

Subject to rule 35, a representative may at any time move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. No discussion on such motions shall be permitted and they shall, subject to rule 25, be put to the vote immediately.

Adjournment of debate

Rule 23

A representative may at any time move the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two representatives in favour of and to two opposing the adjournment, after which the motion shall, subject to rule 25, be put to the vote immediately.

Closure of debate

Rule 24

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the question under discussion, whether or not any other representative has signified his/her wish to speak. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two representatives opposing the closure, after which the motion shall, subject to rule 25, be put to the vote immediately.

Order of motions

Rule 25

The motions indicated below shall have precedence in the following order over all proposals or other motions before the meeting:

- (a) To suspend the meeting;
- (b) To adjourn the meeting;
- (c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion;
- (d) To close the debate on the question under discussion.

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Submission of proposals and substantive amendments

Rule 26

Proposals and substantive amendments shall normally be submitted in writing to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who shall circulate copies to all delegations. Unless the Conference decides otherwise, substantive proposals shall be discussed or put to the vote no earlier than 24 hours after copies have been circulated in all languages of the Conference to all delegations.

Withdrawal of proposals and motions

Rule 27

A proposal or a motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that it has not been amended. A proposal or a motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any representative.

Decisions on competence

Rule 28

Any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Conference to discuss any matter or to adopt a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before the matter is discussed or a vote is taken on the proposal in question.

Reconsideration of proposals

Rule 29

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered unless the Conference, by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing reconsideration, after which the motion shall, subject to rule 25, be put to the vote immediately.

VII. VOTING AND ELECTIONS

Voting rights

Rule 30

Each State participating in the Conference shall have one vote.

Majority required 5/

Rule 31

1. Decisions of the Conference on all matters of substance shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting.
2. Except as otherwise provided in these rules decisions of the Conference on matters of procedure shall be taken by a simple majority of the representatives present and voting.
3. If the question arises whether a matter is one of procedure or of substance, it shall be decided by the Conference by a simple majority of the representatives present and voting.
4. If a vote is equally divided on a decision requiring a simple majority of the representatives present and voting, the proposal or motion shall be regarded as rejected.

Meaning of the phrase "representatives present and voting"

Rule 32

For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "representatives present and voting" means representatives casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives who abstain from voting shall be regarded as not voting.

Method of voting

Rule 33

Except as provided in rule 40, the Conference shall normally vote by show of hands, but if a representative requests a roll-call, it shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the States participating in the Conference, beginning with the delegation whose name is drawn by lot by the President. The name of each State shall be called in all roll-calls, and its representative shall reply "yes", "no" or "abstention".

Explanation of vote

Rule 34

Representatives may make brief statements consisting solely of explanation of their votes, before the voting has commenced or after the voting has been completed. The President may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations. The representative of a State sponsoring a proposal or motion shall not speak in explanation of vote thereon except if it has been amended.

^{5/} For the majority required for decisions of committees and working groups see rule 44 (d).

Conduct during voting

Rule 35

The President shall announce the commencement of voting, after which no representative shall be permitted to intervene until the result of the vote has been announced, except on a point of order in connexion with the process or actual conduct of the voting.

Division of proposals

Rule 36

A representative may move that parts of a proposal be voted on separately. If a representative objects, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two representatives in favour of and to two opposing the division. If the motion is carried, those parts of the proposal that are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Amendments

Rule 37

A proposal is considered an amendment to another proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal. Unless specified otherwise, the word "proposal" in these rules shall be considered as including amendments.

Order of voting on amendments

Rule 38

When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the Conference shall vote first on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon.

Order of voting on proposals

Rule 39

1. If two or more proposals, other than amendments, relate to the same question, they shall, unless the Conference decides otherwise, be voted on in the order in which they were submitted. The Conference may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

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2. Revised proposals shall be voted on in the order in which the original proposals were submitted unless the revision substantially departs from the original proposal. In that case the original proposal shall be considered as withdrawn and the revised proposal shall be treated as a new proposal.

3. A motion requiring that no decision be taken on a proposal shall have priority over that proposal.

Elections

Rule 40

All elections shall be held by secret ballot, unless the Conference decides otherwise in an election where the number of candidates does not exceed the number of elective places to be filled.

Rule 41

1. When one or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates, in a number not exceeding the number of such places, obtaining in the first ballot a majority of the votes cast and the largest number of votes, shall be elected.

2. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of places to be filled, additional ballots shall be held to fill the remaining places.

VIII. SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

Main Committees and working groups

Rule 42

There shall be two Main Committees, each of which may establish working groups.

Representation on the Main Committees

Rule 43

Each State participating in the Conference may be represented by one representative on each Main Committee and on any other subsidiary organ of which it is a member. It may assign to those bodies such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

Officers and procedures

Rule 44

The rules relating to officers (rules 6 to 8), the secretariat of the Conference (rules 11 to 13), the conduct of business of the Conference (rules 15 to 29) and voting (rules 30 to 41) shall be applicable mutatis mutandis, to the proceedings of committees and working groups, except that:

(a) Unless otherwise decided, the Credentials Committee and any working group shall elect a Presiding Officer and such other officers as it may require;

(b) The Presiding Officers of the General and Credentials Committees and of working groups may exercise the right to vote;

(c) A majority of the representatives on the General or Credentials Committees or on any working group shall constitute a quorum; the Presiding Officers of a Main Committee may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when representatives of at least one quarter of the States participating in the Conference are present;

(d) Decisions of committees and working groups shall be taken by a majority of the representatives present and voting, except that the reconsideration of a proposal shall require the majority established by rule 29.

IX. LANGUAGES AND RECORDS

Languages of the Conference

Rule 45

Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the working languages of the Conference.

Interpretation

Rule 46

1. Speeches made in a working language of the Conference shall be interpreted into the other such languages.
2. A representative may speak in a language other than a working language of the Conference if he/she provides for interpretation into one such language. Interpretation into the other working languages of the Conference by interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first such language.

Languages of official documents

Rule 47

Official documents shall be made available in the working languages of the Conference.

Records of meetings

Rule 48

1. There shall be neither verbatim nor summary records of meetings.
2. Sound recordings of public meetings of the Conference and of all committees shall be made and kept in accordance with the practice of the United Nations. Unless otherwise decided by the Main Committee concerned, no such recordings shall be made of the meetings of a working group thereof.

X. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEETINGS

General principles

Rule 49

1. The plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of the Main Committees shall be held in public unless the body concerned decides otherwise.
2. As a general rule, meetings of other organs of the Conference shall be held in private.

Communiqués on private meetings

Rule 50

At the close of a private meeting, the body concerned may issue a communiqué to the press through the Secretary-General of the Conference.

XI. OTHER PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

Representatives of the United Nations Council for Namibia

Rule 51

Representatives designated by the United Nations Council for Namibia may participate in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and any working group, in accordance with paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 32/9 E of 4 November 1977.

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Representatives of organizations that have received a standing invitation from the General Assembly to participate, in the capacity of observer, in the sessions and work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of the General Assembly

Rule 52

Representatives designated by organizations that have received a standing invitation from the General Assembly to participate in the sessions and work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of the General Assembly have the right to participate as observers, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and any working group thereof.

Representatives of national liberation movements

Rule 53

Representatives designated by national liberation movements invited to the Conference in accordance with paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 33/189 of 29 January 1979 may participate as observers, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any working group thereof on any matter of particular concern to those movements.

Representatives of the specialized agencies 6/

Rule 54

Representatives designated by the specialized agencies may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any working group thereof on questions within the scope of their activities.

Representatives of other intergovernmental organizations

Rule 55

Representatives designated by other intergovernmental organizations invited to the Conference may participate as observers, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any working group thereof on questions within the scope of their activities.

6/ For the purpose of these rules, the term "specialized agencies" includes also the International Atomic Energy Agency and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Representatives of interested United Nations organs

Rule 56

Representatives designated by interested organs of the United Nations may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any working group thereof on questions within the scope of their activities.

Written statements

Rule 57

Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 51 to 56 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are made available to the secretariat for distribution.

Representatives of non-governmental organizations

Rule 58

1. Non-governmental organizations invited to the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and its Main Committees.
2. Upon the invitation of the Presiding Officer of the body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements of not more than five minutes on questions in which they have a special competence.
3. Written statements submitted by such non-governmental organizations on subjects in which they have a special competence and which are related to the work of the Conference, shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are made available to the secretariat for distribution.

XII. AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Method of amendment

Rule 59

These rules of procedure may be amended by a decision of the Conference taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, after the General Committee has reported on the proposed amendment.

Method of suspension

Rule 60

Any of these rules may be suspended by the Conference provided that 24 hours' notice of the proposal for the suspension has been given, which may be waived if no representative objects. Any such suspension shall be limited to a specific and stated purpose and to the period required to achieve that purpose.
