

UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE



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PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE

Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE

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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. 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 composition shall be based on that of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its twenty-ninth 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

Rule 6

The Conference shall elect the following officers: a President, ... Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur-General, as well as a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur for each of the main committees provided for in rule 44.

Acting President

Rule 7

1. If the President is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, he shall designate a Vice-President to take his place.
2. A Vice-President acting as President shall have the same powers and duties as the President.

Voting rights of the President

Rule 8

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

III. GENERAL COMMITTEE

Composition

Rule 9

The President, Vice-Presidents and Chairmen of the main committees, as well as the Rapporteur-General of the Conference, shall constitute the General Committee. The officers of the Conference shall act as officers of the Committee. The chairman of the Credentials Committee may participate in the General Committee without the right to vote.

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. CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Duties of the Secretary-General

Rule 11

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, or the Secretary-General of the Conference, shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies. Either may designate a member of the Secretariat to act in his 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) interpret 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; and,
- (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 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

Rule 15

The President may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one third of the representatives of the States participating in the Conference are present. The presence of representatives of a majority of such States 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 elsewhere by these rules, the President shall preside at the plenary meetings of the Conference: he shall 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. He shall rule on points of order. The President, subject to these rules, shall 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 on the time to be allowed to speakers and on the number of times the representative of each State may speak on a 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 functions, remains under the authority of the Conference.

Points of order

Rule 17

Subject to rule 35, 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. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote, 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 21-24, 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 remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

3. The Conference may limit the time allowed to speakers and the number of times the representative of each State may speak on a 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 immediately put to the vote. In any event, the President shall limit interventions on procedural questions to a maximum of five minutes. When the debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the President shall call him to order without delay.

Precedence

Rule 19

The Chairman or Rapporteur of a committee may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusion arrived at by his committee.

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 the debate on an item is concluded because there are no more speakers, the President shall declare the debate closed. Such closure shall have the same effect as closure pursuant to rule 23.

Right of reply

Rule 21

Notwithstanding rule 20, the President may accord the right of reply to a representative of any State participating in the Conference. 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.

Adjournment of debate

Rule 22

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 immediately put to the vote.

Closure of debate

Rule 23

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 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 immediately put to the vote.

Suspension or adjournment of the meeting

Rule 24

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 immediately put to the vote.

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.

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 of a motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that it had 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 adopt a proposal submitted to it, shall be put to the vote before 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 be immediately put to the vote.

VII. VOTING AND ELECTIONS

Voting rights

Rule 30

Each State participating in the Conference shall have one vote.

Majority required

Rule 31

1. Unless the Conference decides otherwise, decisions of the Conference on all matters of substance shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting.

2. Unless the Conference decides otherwise and except as otherwise provided, decisions of the Conference on all 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, the President shall rule on the question. An appeal against such a ruling shall be immediately put to the vote, and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives present and voting.

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, except that a representative may request a roll call, which shall then 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

The President may permit representatives to explain their votes, either before or after the voting, except when the vote is taken by secret ballot. He 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.

Conduct during voting

Rule 35

After the President has announced the commencement of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connexion with the 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.
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 be put to the vote before a vote is taken on the proposal in question.

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. If, when only one elective place is to be filled, no candidate obtains in the first ballot the majority required, a second ballot shall be taken, confined to the two candidates having obtained the largest number of votes. If in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the President shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.
2. In the case of a tie in the first ballot among the candidates obtaining the second largest number of votes, a special ballot shall be held among such candidates for the purpose of reducing their number to two; similarly, in the case of a tie among three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes, a special ballot shall be held; if a tie again results in the special ballot, the President shall eliminate one candidate by drawing lots and thereafter another ballot shall be held in accordance with paragraph 1.

Rule 42

1. When two 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 the majority required 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, provided that if only one place remains to be filled the procedures in rule 41 shall be applied. The ballot shall be restricted to the unsuccessful candidates having obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, but not exceeding twice the number of places remaining to be filled. However, in the case of a tie between a greater number of unsuccessful candidates, a special ballot shall be held for the purpose of reducing the number of candidates to the required number; if a tie again results among more than the required number of candidates, the President shall reduce their number to that required by drawing lots.
3. If such a restricted ballot (not counting a special ballot held under the conditions specified in the last sentence of paragraph 2) is inconclusive, the President shall decide among the candidates by drawing lots.

Equally divided votes

Rule 43

If a vote is equally divided on a matter other than an election, the proposal or motion shall be regarded as rejected.

VIII. COMMITTEES

Main committees and working groups

Rule 44

The Conference may establish main committees for the performance of its functions. Each such committee may establish working groups.

Representation on the main committeesRule 45

Each State participating in the Conference may be represented by one representative on each main committee. It may assign to these committees such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

Officers and proceduresRule 46

The rules relating to officers, the Conference secretariat, conduct of business and voting of the Conference (contained in chapters II (rules 6-8), IV (rules 11-13), VI (rules 15-29) and VII (rules 30-43 above) 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 chairman and such other officers as it may require;
- (b) the Chairmen of the General and Credentials Committees and the Chairmen of working groups may exercise the right to vote;
- (c) a majority of the representatives on the General or Credentials Committee or on any working group shall constitute a quorum; the chairman of a main committee may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one-quarter of the representatives 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 ConferenceRule 47

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

InterpretationRule 48

1. Speeches made in a language of the Conference shall be interpreted into the other such languages.

2. A representative may make a speech in a language other than a language of the Conference if he provides for interpretation into one such language. Interpretation into the other languages of the Conference by interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first such language.

Language of official documents

Rule 49

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

Sound recordings of meetings

Rule 50

Sound recordings of 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 51

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. Meetings of other organs of the Conference shall be held in private.

Communiqués on private meetings

Rule 52

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 liberation movements

Rule 53

1. Representatives designated by liberation movements invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its main committees and, as appropriate, the working groups thereof, upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned, on questions within the scope of their activities.
2. Written statements of such representatives shall be distributed by the Secretariat to all delegations.

Representatives of United Nations organs and agenciesRule 54

1. Representatives designated by organs of the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency or the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its main committees and, as appropriate, the working groups thereof, upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned, on questions within the scope of their activities.
2. Written statements of such representatives shall be distributed by the Secretariat to all delegations.

Observers for other intergovernmental organizationsRule 55

1. Observers designated by other intergovernmental organizations invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its main committees and, as appropriate, the working groups thereof, upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned, on questions within the scope of their activities.
2. Written statements of such observers shall be distributed by the Secretariat to all delegations.

Observers for non-governmental organizationsRule 56

1. International 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 on questions within the scope of their activities.
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 circulated by the Secretariat in all the languages of the Conference, provided that the organization submits the text in at least one such language and that such text does not exceed 500 words if submitted by one organization or an appropriate greater number, as determined by the Secretary-General of the Conference, if submitted by more than one organization. Longer statements shall be distributed by the Secretariat in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are made available.

XII. AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Method of amendment

Rule 57

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 58

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