

The United Nations Environment Assembly Committee of Permanent Representatives

Rules of Procedure

Orientation session for the accredited representatives of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme

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Credentials

All Member States are required to present credentials for each session of the UN Environment Assembly pursuant to the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

For high level plenaries such as the General Assembly, as well as UNEA, Member States often do provide credentials, signed by either the Head of State or Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, other formal communications containing the names of representatives, such as letters and Note Verbales from the Permanent Missions or formal communications from Government Ministries would be sufficient.

Subsidiary bodies of UNEA – credentials signed by Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs are not required to participate. Representatives of Member States, as well as representatives of the Holy See, the State of Palestine and the European Union are required to register through the INDICO platform available online by uploading a formal letter or Note Verbale from their Embassy or Permanent Mission addressed to the Secretariat containing the composition of delegation.

Formal registration is subject to review and approval by the Secretariat and is sufficient to participate in the meetings of subsidiary bodies, including participating in the election of officers.





Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Governing Council decision 19/32, paragraph 9 provides that “the Committee of Permanent Representatives shall elect a Bureau composed of a Chairperson, three Vice Chairpersons and a Rapporteur, for a period of two years, taking into account the principles of rotation and equitable geographical representation”.

Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau shall assist the Chair in the general conduct of business of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

Decision of 23 June 2021, reaffirmed that the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives shall conduct its work in a collaborative manner and, in the light of the tasks expected of it, recommends that it adopt, under the leadership of its Chair and in a balanced manner, practical arrangements for the sharing of responsibilities among the Chair, the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur.



UNEA BUREAU

Rule 18 – Elections

1. During the final meeting of a regular session, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall elect a President, eight Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur from among its members. These officers shall constitute the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The Bureau shall assist the President in the general conduct of business of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The chairpersons of such sessional committees or working parties as may be established under rule 61 below shall be invited to participate in meetings of the Bureau.
2. In electing its officers, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall ensure that each of the five regions is represented by two members in the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
3. The Offices of President and Rapporteur of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall normally be subject to rotation among the five groups of States referred to in section I, paragraph 1, of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII)

The Bureau

Rule 19 – Replacement of a Bureau member (as applicable to both the CPR and UNEA)

1. During a session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, if a Bureau member, except the President, is unable to permanently carry out any of her or his functions, the Assembly may elect an alternate upon appointment by a member State or by the regional group to which that member belongs.
 2. During the intersessional period, if a Bureau member resigns or is unable to exercise her or his functions, the member State or the regional group to which that member belongs shall nominate a replacement for the remainder of the term. The Executive Director shall immediately upon receipt of the nomination inform all members of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the nomination in writing. If within one month no objections are received in writing, the nominee is elected. If a member State objects, the nominee is elected if most member States responding support the nominee.
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Functions of the Bureau of the CPR

The Bureau with the support of the Secretariat and in consultation with members of regional groups:

- Carry out the tasks entrusted to it by the Committee and the Chair;
 - Assist the Chair in the general conduct of business of the Committee;
 - Prepare for the meetings of the Committee, including by providing guidance on the dates of meetings, advising and providing input on the preparation of the provisional agenda, meeting documentation, the draft programme of work and the scheduling of items for the meetings of the Committee;
 - Facilitate consideration of draft resolutions and decisions by the Committee, including through the selection of facilitators, for subsequent transmission to the Environment Assembly, in close consultation with the UNEA Bureau;
 - Coordinate with the UNEA Bureau and its President to ensure that the work of the Committee is coherent, complementary and in support of the decision-making process of the Environment Assembly.
- **(Final review of the consensual process of review by the CPR, B.10)**

Functions of the UNEA Bureau

- To assist the President in the general conduct of business of the United Nations Environment Assembly (Rule 18 (1) of the UNEA Rules of Procedure)
- To examine the credentials and submit its report to the United Nations Environment Assembly (Rule 17(2) of the UNEA Rules of Procedure)
- To Guide the CPR
 - to ensure that the UNEA theme provides a framework for political debate at the high-level segment as well as for official UNEA events (Final review of the consensual process of review by the CPR, paragraph 1)
 - to create an optimal balance between political negotiations, the UNEA high-level segment, and official and non-official UNEA events (Final review of the consensual process of review by the CPR, paragraph 5)
 - to strengthen the contributions and active participation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to UNEA to promote coherence between the UNEA resolutions and the MEAs governing bodies' decisions (Final review of the consensual process of review by the CPR, paragraph 6)
 - to strengthen the science-policy interface at UNEA (Final review of the consensual process of review by the CPR, paragraph 8)

Action phase: Adoption by Consensus

- In the United Nations practice, most proposals are adopted by consensus.
 - Consensus is generally understood to mean adoption of a decision without formal objections and vote; this being possible only when no delegation formally objects to consensus being recorded, though some delegations may have reservations to the substantive matter at issue or to a part of it. The fact that consensus is recorded does not necessarily mean that there is “unanimity”, namely, complete agreement as to substance and a consequent absence of reservations. For example, there are numerous occasions where States make declarations or reservations to a matter at issue while not objecting to a decisions being recorded by consensus.
 - Within the practice of the United Nations explanation of votes before and after the vote are permitted even when a proposal is adopted by consensus.
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Action phase: Adoption by Vote

- Methods of voting: Rule 50: (1) Show of hands, (2) Roll call; and now (3) electronic means.
- Whether a draft proposal or resolution has been adopted by a vote is determined based on whether the draft resolution has met the required majority, i.e., a majority of those present and voting, which is determined exclusively based on the affirmative and negative votes cast. (Rule 49)
- The mere fact that the number of votes (i.e., yes, no and abstentions) recorded, is less than a majority of the Members of the United Nations Environment Assembly, is insufficient evidence that a majority (i.e., quorum) was not present, since there is no obligation to vote. Thus, representatives may be physically present for the purpose of quorum but not participate in the voting process

Participation of Specialized Agencies, The International Atomic Energy Agency, United Nations Bodies and Other Intergovernmental Organizations

Rule 69:

- Representatives of specialized agencies, of the IAEA and UN bodies, as well as of the intergovernmental organizations, may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of UNEA and its subsidiary organs, if any, upon the invitation of the President or Chairperson on questions within the scope of their activities.
- Can circulate written statements.
- A regional economic integration organization may participate in the deliberations of the United Nations Environment Assembly with the same modalities as those applicable to its participation in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly. (European Union).

Specialized agencies of the UN



EUROPEAN UNION

Regional Economic Integration Organization

- Participation in the deliberations of UNEA with the same modalities as those applicable to its participation in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly (Rule 69(3) of the UNEA Rules of Procedure). Thus, participation in UNEA is governed by General Assembly resolution 65/276 of 3 May 2011 entitled, Participation of the European Union in the work of the United Nations.
- Additional rights include Inscribed on the list of speakers among representatives of major groups, to make interventions; permitted to have its communications circulated directly, permitted to present proposals and amendments orally as agreed by the States members of the European Union; such proposals and amendments shall be put to a vote only at the request of a Member State; allowed to exercise the right of reply regarding positions of the European Union.
- Participation in the CPR as full member (Governing Council decision 19/32, 4 April 1997, OP8).



Observers of international non-governmental organizations

Rule 70

1. International non-governmental organizations having an interest in the field of the environment, referred to in section IV, paragraph 5, of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs. Upon the invitation of the President or Chairperson international nongovernmental organizations may make oral statements on matters within the scope of their activities.
2. They can also have their statements circulated.



Thank you



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