

# **RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE OF PLENIPOTENTAIRES OF THE PAN AFRICAN POSTAL UNION**

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**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PLENOPOTENTIARY  
CONFERENCE OF THE UNION**

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1: Session

The Secretary General shall, two months before the holding of the session of the Conference, notify the Member-State, the Secretary General of the AU as well as the observers, of the venue and date of the meeting and of the proposed agenda.

Article 2: Agenda

- a) The draft agenda of a session of the Conference shall be prepared by the Secretary General of the Union.
- b) The Conference shall adopt the agenda before starting its deliberations.
- c) Agenda of the Conference

The draft agenda of an ordinary session of the Conference shall comprise in particular:

- d) Election of the Members of the Bureau;
- e) Adoption of the agenda;
- f) The Quadrennial Report of the Secretary General ;
- g) Items proposed by the administrative Council;
- h) Items which the Conference decided to place on its agenda;
- i) Report of the Administrative Council;
- j) Election of the Secretary-General, Assistant Secretary-General and the members
- k) Of the Administrative Council of the Union;
- l) Items proposed by Member-States;
- m) Items referred to it by the AU;
- n) Date and venue of next ordinary session;
- o) Any other business.

4. Agenda for an Extraordinary Session

The agenda of an extraordinary session shall be communicated by the Secretary General to Member-States at least 15 days before the opening of the session. It shall comprise only items submitted for consideration in the request for convening the session.

Article 3: 1/ Opening Session

- a) The opening of a session of the Conference shall be preceded by a meeting of the Heads of delegations and of the Secretary-General of the Union to consult on the agenda and election of the bureau.
- b) The first sitting of each session shall be opened by the outgoing Chairman. In his absence, the session shall be opened by one of the outgoing Vice –Chairman or, in their absence, by the eldest representative of the Member-State.

## 2/ Public and “in camera” sittings

All sittings of the Conference shall be held in camera with the exception of the formal opening and closing. However, the conference may decide by a simple majority to conduct its proceedings in public.

### Article 4: Election of the Bureau and duration of term of office

1. During the opening sitting, at the proposal of one Member State, seconded by two other Member-States, the Conference shall elect its Bureau, composed of one Chairman, two Vice-Chairman and two reporters. They shall assume their duties immediately and terminate their mandate after the election of the members of a new Bureau. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman shall be re-eligible once.
2. The members of the Bureau are elected to office exclusively as representative of their States and in no case in their individual capacity.

### Article 5: Functions of the Chairman

The Chairman shall organize the work during the sittings. He shall open and close sittings, direct the debates, grant the use of the floor, submit to a vote matters under discussions, announce the results of votes and rule on points of order in accordance with the present Rules of Procedure.

### Article 6: Vacancy or absence

In case of a vacancy or absence of the Chairman, one of the Vice-Chairmen shall act in his place. If neither the Chairman nor any of the Vice-Chairman is present, the meeting shall elect a Chairman ad interim.

### Article 7: Committees and Working Groups

The Conference may set up Committees and Working Groups in which all or some of the Member-States and observers may participate.

### Article 8: Seating arrangement

Delegations shall be seated in alphabetical order of the names of their countries.

### Article 9: Quorum

The Quorum shall be made up of two thirds of Member-States of the Union.

## **CHAPTER II: CONDUCT OF PROCEEDINGS**

### Articles 10: Conduct of Proceedings

1. No representative shall have the floor without the consent of the Chairman shall grant the floor in the order in which it has been requested. He may call to order any representative whose statement is not relevant to the matter under discussion.
2. During the course of debate, the Chairman may make and announce the list of speakers and with the consent of the meeting, declare the list closed. The Chairman may, however, give the right of reply to

any representative if, in his opinion, a speech delivered after he has declared the list closed makes this desirable.

#### Article 11: Time-Limit of intervention

The Chairman, with the consent of the Conference may limit the time allowed to each speaker on any matter. On procedural questions, the Chairman shall limit each intervention to a maximum of five minutes. When debate is limited and a representative exceeds his allotted time the Chairman shall call him to order without delay.

#### Article 12: Points of Order

1. During the debate, a representative may raise a point or order and the point of order shall be immediately decided by a Chairman in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the Chairman. The appeal shall immediately be put to the vote and decided by a simple majority of members present and voting.
2. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

#### Article 13: Procedural motions

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

1. Suspension of the meeting;
2. Adjournment of the meeting
3. Adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion;
4. Closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

#### Article 14: Suspension or adjournment of the meeting

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the suspension or adjournment of the meeting. No discussion on such a motion shall be permitted, and it shall be immediately put to the vote and decided by a simple majority of members present and voting.

#### Article 15: Adjournment of debate

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one representative may speak in favor and one against the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to vote and decided by a simple majority of members present and voting.

#### Article 16: Closure of debate

When a matter has been sufficiently discussed, any representative may move the closure of the debate. Two representatives may speak in favor of the motion and two against the motion, after which the motion shall be considered and approved if it has a simple majority of members present and voting in its favor. When the debate on an item is concluded because there are no other speakers, the Chairman shall declare the debate closed.

## **CHAPTER III: VOTING**

### Article 17: Voting right

1. Each Member-State of the Union shall have the right to vote and shall have one vote only.
2. The vote of each Member-State shall only be cast by the duly accredited person.
3. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.
4. Observers shall have no voting right.
5. Member-States that are two years in arrears of payment of their contributions shall not be entitled to vote.

### Article 18: Method of voting and explanation of votes

1. As a general rule, the Conference shall strive to take decisions by considering the consensus of views expressed without having recourse to the vote.
2. When a vote is required it shall be by show of hands, but any representative may request a roll-call vote which shall be taken in alphabetical order of the names of the Member-States. After a vote, any representative may request the use of the floor to explain his vote.
3. There shall be a secret vote for elections and also in such special circumstances as the Conference may determine by a simple majority of its members present and voting.
4. In the event of equality votes, the proposal is deemed to be rejected.
5. Except where otherwise provided, all resolutions shall be decided by a simple majority of the Member-States present and voting.
6. After discussion on a resolution has been closed, the Chairman shall immediately put it to the vote with all amendments. The vote shall not be interrupted except on a point of order related to the manner in which the vote is taking place.
7. 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 vote shall first be on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed there from and so on, until all the amendments have been put to vote. If one or several amendments are adopted, the proposal shall be put to the vote in its original form. A proposal is considered as an amendment to a text if it adds or removes parts there from or otherwise modifies it.
8. Parts of a proposal, resolution or a motion shall be voted on separately when so requested. If this is done, the text resulting from a series of votes shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of a proposed resolution or motion have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

## **CHAPTER IV: FINAL PROVISIONS**

### Article 19: Resolutions and decisions

1. Proposed resolutions, motions or amendments shall be presented in writing to the Secretary-General who shall circulate copies thereof to representatives. However, the Conference may by simple majority of Member-States present and voting, authorize the discussions of a proposal not previously distributed. Proposed resolutions and motions shall be examined in the order of their submission.
2. A motion on a proposed resolution may be withdrawn by the mover prior to its being submitted to the vote. Any representative may re-introduce a motion or proposed resolution that has been withdrawn.
3. The conclusions of the plenary meeting may be subject of resolutions and decisions.
4. The conclusions of Committees shall be the subject of draft resolutions and decisions to be submitted to the plenary for adoption.
5. All resolutions shall be adopted by a simple majority of Member-States present and voting.

### Article 20: Minutes

1. The minutes of the plenary sittings shall be concisely prepared by the Secretariat of the Conference under the supervision of Rapporteurs.
2. A working document shall be prepared, as soon as possible, for each item of the draft agenda of an ordinary or extraordinary session. The working document shall be sent, at least thirty days before the opening of the meeting to Member-States and to the Secretary-General of the OAU.
3. After each session of the Conference, the Secretary-General shall send, as soon as possible, to Member-States of the Union and to the Secretary General of the OAU, a copy of the following documents:
  - a. Minutes of the plenary sessions;
  - b. Documents which the Conference shall decide to communicate in support of the reports;
4. C) Resolutions and decisions.
5. The Conference members and observers shall receive the documents, which they need.

### Article 22: Press releases

Official releases on the proceedings of the sessions shall be drafted by the Secretary-General and communicated to the press with the consent of the Chairman or one of the Vice-Chairmen of the meeting.

### Article 23: Adoption

The present Rules of Procedure shall be adopted by a simple majority of the Member-States of the Conference present and voting.

Article 24: Amendments

The present Rules of Procedure may be amended by a simple majority of the Members of the Conference present and voting.