



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# 142nd IPU ASSEMBLY

## Virtual session, 24-28 May 2021

Governing Council  
Item 2

CL/207/2-P.1  
22 March 2021

### Adoption of the Special Rules of Procedure for the virtual sessions of the Assembly and Standing Committees

#### Special Rules of Procedure to regulate the conduct of virtual sessions of the Assembly and Standing Committees

*At its sitting of 18 January 2021, the Executive Committee took a number of decisions regarding the format and structure of the 142nd IPU Assembly, to be held virtually during the week of 24 May 2021.*

*A Working Group was established to examine possible special/simplified Rules of Procedure to regulate the conduct of virtual sessions of the Assembly and Standing Committees (142nd Assembly but also possible future Assemblies held in virtual format).*

*The Working Group, chaired by Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda (Zimbabwe) and composed of the Executive Committee representatives from Egypt, Pakistan, Switzerland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe, as well as the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, the President of the Board of the Forum of Young MPs and the IPU Secretary General, met on 26 February. The Working Group examined and amended the draft special rules of procedure prepared by the Secretariat with the support of the independent Legal Counsel. These were approved by the Executive Committee at its sitting on 22 March 2021.*

*The Governing Council is now invited to endorse this document in advance of the 142nd IPU Assembly (virtual session), through the written silence procedure. These Special Rules of Procedure would then be formally adopted by the Governing Council at its first sitting on 24 May.*

#### **I. Special Rules of Procedure for the Assembly (meeting in virtual format)**

The Rules of the Assembly shall continue to apply in full, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these Special Rules of Procedure, in which case the decision of the Assembly to adopt these Special Rules of Procedure shall constitute a decision to suspend the relevant Rules of the Assembly to the extent necessary.

The Rules of the Assembly that shall be suspended are the following:

- Rule 4 to 6 with regard to the venue and duration of a physical Assembly
- Rule 9 with regard to the Steering Committee
- Rules 11, 12 and 15.3 with regard to emergency items
- Rules 17 to 20 with regard to amendments and sub-amendments
- Rules 28 to 32 with regard to voting
- Rule 33 with regard to quorum
- Rule 34 with regard to majorities

#IPU142

## **1. ATTENDANCE**

1.1 Attendance by Members, Associate Members and Observers shall be through secured access to videoconference or other electronic means allowing representatives to hear other participants and to address the meeting remotely as appropriate.

1.2 For the purpose of attendance, and voting, the gender inclusiveness of delegations of Members under Articles 10 and 15(c) of the Statutes will be assessed on the basis of the list submitted by each Member for the purpose of registration by the deadline indicated below.

## **2. REGISTRATION**

2.1 Registration shall take place through an online system in accordance with established practice. Each IPU Member participating in the session shall communicate the name, gender, age and contact details of its delegates as well as the scan of an official letter from the Speaker of parliament or the President of the IPU Group concerned.

2.2 The deadline for registration shall be 15 days before the opening of the session. No further changes to the composition of delegations will be possible after that date except in case of force majeure preventing a registered member from attending the session. The existence of such a situation must be certified by the Speaker of the Parliament or the President of the IPU Group concerned through a written communication to the Secretary General.

## **3. QUORUM**

The number of registered delegations at the registration deadline indicated in Rule 2.2 of these Special Rules of Procedure shall be used to establish the quorum.

## **4. ADDRESSING THE ASSEMBLY**

4.1 During the virtual session, statements by delegates shall be limited to two minutes.

4.2 Delegates may also submit written statements in either English or French (the official languages of the Organization) with an indication of the agenda item to which they refer, in advance of the opening of the session of the Assembly. Written statements shall be in lieu of live interventions. These shall be posted on a dedicated web page and shall form part of the official records of the session.

4.3 Delegates may also submit pre-recorded video statements with an indication of the agenda item to which they refer, in advance of the opening of the session. Pre-recorded video statements shall be in lieu of live interventions.

4.4 Any delegate wishing to take the floor should signal their wish to speak. A delegate wishing to raise a point of order in relation to a statement made during the session should signal their intention to do so. The President will rule on the point of order in accordance with Rule 23 of the Rules of the Assembly.

4.5 Observers are invited to submit written statements in either English or French (the official languages of the Organization) with an indication of the agenda item to which they refer, in advance of the opening of the session of the Assembly. Such statements shall be posted on a dedicated web page.

## **5. DECISION-MAKING**

All decisions of the Assembly taken in a virtual session shall be, as far as possible, adopted by consensus. In view of the virtual nature of the session and of technical limitations, resolutions prepared by the Standing Committees and outcomes of the General Debate endorsed by the Executive Committee shall be submitted for adoption by the Assembly through the written silence procedure as outlined in Rule 6 below.

## **6. WRITTEN SILENCE PROCEDURE**

6.1 The following written silence procedure shall apply in respect of any proposal that the IPU President determines, following informal consultations, is suitable for adoption without further discussion by the Assembly.

6.2 At the request of the President, the Secretary General shall transmit to Members any such proposal for consideration under this written silence procedure.

6.3 The communication shall contain the text of the proposal(s) to be considered under this written silence procedure. Any such objection shall be conveyed in writing, including by email, and addressed to the Secretary General. The objection must have been received within 15 days of the date of the dispatch of the communication.

6.4 In the absence of the receipt by the stipulated deadline of written objections from one third or more of Members, the proposal concerned shall be considered as having been validly adopted by the Assembly. Objections shall be reproduced in footnotes appended to the text of the resolution or decision once adopted.

6.5 The Secretary General shall communicate the outcome of the written silence procedure to all Members as soon as possible after the set deadline referred to above. In the case of a proposal that is adopted pursuant to the written silence procedure, the date of the Secretary General's communication to that effect shall be the date of adoption of the proposal.

6.6 Without prejudice to the above, a Member may explain their position in respect of a proposal that is subject to the written silence procedure by submitting a written statement relating thereto, for posting on the IPU website. Written statements should be received by the Secretary General by the date set for receipt of objections. Written statements shall be made available on the IPU website for information purposes only. They shall appear as submitted and in the language(s) of submission. Submission of a written statement in accordance with this paragraph shall not be considered as an objection.

## **II. Special Rules of Procedure for the Standing Committees (meeting in virtual format)**

The Rules of the Standing Committees shall continue to apply in full, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these Special Rules of Procedure, in which case the decision of the Governing Council to adopt these Special Rules of Procedure shall constitute a decision to suspend the relevant Rules of the Standing Committees to the extent necessary.

The Rules of the Standing Committees that shall be suspended are the following:

- Rule 7 paragraph 6 with regard to the election of Bureau members by secret ballot
- Rule 13 paragraph 2 with regard to the deadline for submission of amendments
- Rule 18 with regard to the deadline for the submission of proposals for subject items
- Rules 24 to 26 with regard to the treatment of amendments and sub-amendments
- Rule 32 with regard to procedural motions.
- Rule 33 with regard to public meetings
- Rule 35 and 36 with regard to the method of voting
- Rule 37 with regard to division of proposals
- Rule 38 with regard to interruption and explanation of the vote
- Rule 39 with regard to quorum
- Rule 40 with regard to the decisions of the Standing Committees and their Bureaux

### **1. ATTENDANCE**

Attendance by Members, Associate Members and Observers shall be through secured access to videoconference or other electronic means allowing representatives to hear other participants and to address the meeting remotely as appropriate.

### **2. QUORUM**

A Standing Committee may meet and deliberate irrespective of the number of members present.

### **3. ADDRESSING THE STANDING COMMITTEES**

3.1 During the virtual session, statements by members shall be limited to two minutes.

3.2 Members may submit written statements in either English or French (the official languages of the Organization) with an indication of the agenda item to which they refer, in advance of the opening of the session of the Standing Committee concerned. Written statements shall be in lieu of live interventions. These shall be posted on a dedicated web page and shall form part of the official records of the session.

3.3 Any member wishing to take the floor should signal their wish to speak. A member wishing to raise a point of order in relation to a statement made during the session should signal their intention to do so. The President will rule on the point of order in accordance with Rule 28 of the Rules of Standing Committees.

3.4 Observers may submit written statements in either English or French (the official languages of the Organization) with an indication of the agenda item to which they refer, in advance of the opening of the session of the Standing Committee concerned. Such statements shall be posted on a dedicated web page.

### **4. DECISION-MAKING**

All decisions of Standing Committees taken in a virtual session shall be, as far as possible, adopted by consensus. Ad-hoc rules shall be established for the adoption of resolutions and subject items, through a transparent and inclusive process.

### **5. WRITTEN SILENCE PROCEDURE**

5.1 The following written silence procedure shall apply in respect of any proposal that the IPU President determines, following informal consultations, is suitable for adoption without further discussion.

5.2 At the request of the President, the Secretary General shall transmit to Members any such proposal for consideration under this written silence procedure.

5.3 The communication shall contain the text of the proposal(s) to be considered under this written silence procedure. Any such objection shall be conveyed in writing, including by email, and addressed to the Secretary General. The objection must have been received within 15 days of the date of the dispatch of the communication.

5.4 In the absence of the receipt by the stipulated deadline of written objections from one third or more of Members, the proposal concerned shall be considered as having been validly adopted. Objections shall be reproduced in footnotes appended to the text of the resolution or decision once adopted.

5.5 The Secretary General shall communicate the outcome of the written silence procedure to all Members as soon as possible after the set deadline referred to above. In the case of a proposal that is adopted pursuant to the written silence procedure, the date of the Secretary General's communication to that effect shall be the date of adoption of the proposal.

5.6 Without prejudice to the above, a Member may explain their position in respect of a proposal that is subject to the written silence procedure by submitting a written statement relating thereto, for posting on the IPU website. Written statements should be received by the Secretary General by the date set for receipt of objections. Written statements shall be made available on the IPU website for information purposes only. They shall appear as submitted and in the language(s) of submission. Submission of a written statement in accordance with this paragraph shall not be considered as an objection.