IMSO
INTERNATIONAL MOBILE
SATELLITE ORGANIZATION

RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ASSEMBLY

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RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY[1]

PART I: SESSIONS

Rule 1: Regular Sessions

Regular sessions of the Assembly shall be held once every two years. Each session shall determine, if possible, the date of the next session.

Rule 2: Extraordinary Sessions

(1) The Director General shall convene an extraordinary session of the Assembly upon the request of one or more Parties which receives the support of one-third of the Parties including the requesting Party or Parties. Requests for extraordinary sessions shall state the purpose(s) for which the session is required and shall be addressed in writing to the Director General.

(2) The Director General shall immediately circulate a request from a Party or Parties among the remaining Parties to ascertain whether it has the required support.

(3) Extraordinary sessions shall be held as soon as possible, but not sooner than thirty (30) days after the required support has been received for a request from a Party or Parties.

(4) An extraordinary session may also be convened on the Director General ’s own initiative, after consultation with the Chair and one of the Vice-Chairs, on not less than (30) days' notice to Parties.

Rule 3: Place of Meetings

Regular and extraordinary sessions shall be held in person in the vicinity of the Organization's headquarters, supported by hybrid meeting capabilities, unless the Assembly decides otherwise. No meeting shall be held elsewhere unless the prospective host agrees to defray the additional expenditure involved.

PART II: PARTICIPANTS

Rule 4: Delegates

Each Party may designate as its delegates one representative and such alternates and advisers as it deems necessary.

Rule 5: Observers

(1) The Director General shall invite as Observers to any session or meeting:

[1] The original text of the Rules of Procedure was adopted by Assembly 1 (October 1979) and subsequently amended by Assembly 8 (September 1991), Assembly 12 (April 1998), Assembly 20 (October 2008), Assembly 22 (June 2012), Assembly 29 (December 2024) and Assembly 30 (October 2026).

(a) representatives of States which have notified to the Director General their intention to become Party; and

(b) international organizations with interests in common with IMSO which the Assembly has decided to invite.

(2) The Director General may, with the advice of the Advisory Committee, make recommendations to the Assembly on the admittance of new Observers, subject to the following criteria and procedures:

(a) requests for admission as Observer shall be submitted through the Director General who shall, at least six weeks in advance, provide the Assembly with relevant information about the purposes, activities, structure and membership of the organization concerned.

(b) the Director General may invite the applying organization to be represented as Observer at the session of the Assembly, on a provisional basis, pending a decision to be taken at the opening meeting of the session.

(c) the request may be accompanied by a draft Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement of Cooperation, which has been agreed in principle between the two Organizations.

(d) in deciding upon such a request, the Assembly shall take into account, *inter alia*, all or any of the following considerations:

(i) the organization is one with which IMSO has an obligation to cooperate pursuant to Article 16 of the Convention or any other provision of the Convention;

(ii) the organization is one with which IMSO has concluded an Agreement of Cooperation or other working arrangement providing, *inter alia*, for participation of each organization in meetings or organs of the other comparable to an Assembly of Parties;

(iii) the organization's purposes and activities are concerned, *inter alia*, with maritime safety and security, protection of the environment or with space radiocommunication technology or systems, or with regulation and coordination of the radio frequency spectrum, or any other aspect of space radiocommunication that may constitute a matter of common interest with IMSO; and

(iv) the participation of the organization as Observer would be of benefit to the Assembly in the discharge of its functions.

(e) the Assembly may decide to approve the draft Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement of Cooperation, which it may authorize the Director General to sign.

(3) Participation of an organization as Observer may be limited to a particular meeting or agenda item.

Rule 6: Providers

The Most Senior Executive of each Provider as defined in Article 1(c) of the IMSO Convention, or their representative, shall be invited to attend sessions**,** without right to vote**,** on matters arising under the Public Services Agreements, subject to the approval of the Assembly.

Rule 7: Credentials

(1) Original credentials of delegations of Parties shall be transmitted to the Director General in advance of each session and not later than the opening day of the Assembly. Electronic copies of the credentials shall be provisionally accepted and shall be followed by originals.

(2) Credentials of delegations of Parties shall be signed by or on behalf of the Head of State, or Prime Minister, or Minister/Secretary of Foreign Affairs, or Minister concerned, or Ambassador/High Commissioner or the appropriate authority properly designated by one of them to act for this purpose.

(3) Only duly accredited representatives shall be permitted to vote under Part VII of these Rules.

(4) The Assembly shall appoint a Credentials Committee at each session of the Assembly, composed of five representatives, ensuring regional representation. The Credentials Committee shall appoint its own Chair. The Credentials Committee shall examine the credentials submitted and shall report to one of the immediately succeeding meetings of that session of the Assembly.

PART III: AGENDA AND DOCUMENTATION

Rule 8: Regular Sessions

(1) Each Party and the Director General may propose items for inclusion on the agenda of a regular session. Proposals made by a Party shall be received by the Director General eight (8) weeks before the beginning of the session. Each proposal shall be in writing and shall state the nature of the proposal and the reasons why it should be considered at the session.

(2) The Director General shall assemble and coordinate the proposals received into a provisional agenda which shall also include all matters which the Convention and these Rules require the Assembly to consider. The Director General shall communicate the provisional agenda to all Parties and observers at least six (6) weeks before the beginning of the session.

(3) The Assembly shall adopt the agenda by a simple majority. Urgent items may be added to the agenda by a two-thirds majority at the time of adoption of the agenda or later in the session.

Rule 9: Extraordinary sessions

The agenda of an extraordinary session shall be restricted to the purpose(s) for which the session was convened, except that urgent items may be added by a two-thirds majority at any time.

Rule 10: Documentation

(1) The Director General shall endeavour to ensure that documentation from Parties and the Directorate is issued at least six (6) weeks before a regular session and four (4) weeks before an extraordinary session of the Assembly, except as provided for in Rule 5(2)(a).

(2) Commenting documents on those referred to in sub-paragraphs 10(1) above should be received by the Directorate not later than four (4) weeks before the opening of a regular session and not later than two (2) weeks before the opening of an extraordinary session of the Assembly.

(3) All documents and supporting documents to agenda items of the Assembly shall be issued in the working language and they should be made available on IMSO Docs.

PART IV: OFFICERS

Rule 11: Regional Representation

(1) The Assembly shall ensure that, in the election of Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Assembly, membership of the Credentials Committee and of the Advisory Committee, regional representation is taken into account. For this purpose, the membership of the Organization is assumed to be grouped into four regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe.

(2) The Chair and Vice-Chairs of the previous session of the Assembly will be responsible, if available, for coordinating regional activities at the subsequent session.

Rule 12: Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Assembly

At the first meeting of each regular or extraordinary session, the Assembly shall elect a Chair, a first Vice-Chair, a second Vice-Chair and a third Vice-Chair from among the representatives of the Parties, ensuring full regional representation. They shall assume office immediately and shall remain in office until the election of their successors at the next regular or extraordinary session.

Rule 13: Temporary Chair

At the opening of a session of the Assembly, the Chair of the preceding session or, if unable, one of the Vice-Chairs or, if they are also unable, the Director General, shall act as Chair until a new Chair has been elected.

Rule 14: Election

(1) If an officer is not elected by acclamation, the election shall be held by secret ballot conducted in person only and be elected by a simple majority vote taken as follows:

(a) The Secretary shall collect the ballots and, together with two tellers appointed by the Assembly by a simple majority vote, count the votes in the presence of the Assembly.

(b) If two or more candidates obtain an equal number of votes a further ballot shall be held with respect to these candidates only. If the votes are again divided equally, the Chair shall decide by drawing lots.

(c) If there are more than two candidates and none of them obtain a simple majority, a new ballot shall be held between the two candidates who obtained the largest number of votes. If the votes for second place are equally divided a new ballot shall be held between the candidates obtaining the largest number of votes and those in second place. If no candidate obtains a majority on the second ballot, a third ballot shall be held between the candidate obtaining the largest number of votes and one of the candidates in second place drawn by lots by the Chair.

Rule 15: Chair's Absence or Inability to Function

(1) If the Chair is absent or unable to complete term of office, one of the Vice-Chairs or, if all are absent, a person elected by the Assembly by simple majority, shall assume the responsibilities of the Chair.

(2) If the Chair, for any reason is unable to carry out their duties in between sessions, one of the Vice-Chair shall act as Chair.

Rule 16: Chair's Voting

(1) The Chair of the Assembly shall not vote.

(2) The Chair of subsidiary organ may vote on behalf of their delegation unless the Chair has designated another member of their own delegation to do so.

PART V: SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

Rule 17: Establishment of subsidiary organs

(1) The Assembly may establish temporary or permanent subsidiary organs as it considers necessary to carry out special tasks with specific Terms of Reference which shall be approved by the Assembly. Such subsidiary organs shall follow the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly so far as they are applicable.

(2) The Assembly may examine the desirability of continuing the existence of any subsidiary organ.

Rule 18: Advisory Committee

(1) The Advisory Committee is a permanent subsidiary organ established by the Assembly[2].

(2) At each regular session, the Assembly shall appoint Members of the Advisory Committee consisting of representatives from a minimum of fifteen Parties and a maximum of preferably one-third of the total membership of the Organization, taking into account the need for full geographical representation, for rotation and for continuity of membership.

(3) The appointment of the Members of the Advisory Committee shall be conducted by the Assembly in accordance with the "Procedures for the Appointment of the Members of the Advisory Committee" adopted by the Assembly[3].

(4) The Advisory Committee shall carry out, on behalf of and under delegation from the Assembly, the tasks set forth in the Terms of Reference approved by the Assembly[4].

PART VI: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 19: Secretary of the meeting

(1) The Director General shall act as Secretary of the Assembly and of its subsidiary organs and shall be responsible for making the necessary arrangements for meetings. The Director General may delegate their functions to a member of the Directorate.

(2) The Director General, or a member of the Directorate designated for the purpose, may make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 20: Quorum

(1) An Assembly session shall not take place unless there is a quorum present.

(2) Parties participating either in person or remotely through the hybrid system shall be counted in determining quorum.

(3) A quorum shall consist of:

(a) in the case of plenary meetings, a simple majority of the Parties.

(b) in the case of any organ of restricted membership, a simple majority of the members of that organ.

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2 Was first established by the Assembly at its fourteenth session.

3 As approved by the Assembly at its thirtieth session.

4 The original text of the Terms of Reference was approved by Assembly 14 (February 1999) and subsequently amended by Assembly 15 (June 2000), Assembly 20 (September/October 2008), Assembly 22 (June 2012), Assembly 28 (September 2022) and Assembly 29 (December 2024).

(4) In order to avoid the risk that an Assembly session will have to be abandoned or cancelled in the event of lack of quorum, the Director General, in the invitation to Parties to sessions of the Assembly, shall urge Parties to make every effort to be represented at the session, and shall draw attention to the consequences of a quorum not being achieved. One week before the start of an Assembly session, the Director General shall advise Parties of the likely status of quorum.

(5) At the commencement of the first meeting of an Assembly session, the Secretary will announce whether or not a quorum is present.

(6) In the event that there is no quorum present, the formal opening of the session may be delayed for no more than half a day.

(7) The quorum may be checked at any time during the session.

Rule 21: Public and Private Meetings

(1) Meetings of the Assembly or any of its subsidiary organs shall not be open to the general public or press, unless the Assembly decides otherwise.

(2) The Assembly and its subsidiary organs may decide to limit attendance to any meeting to Parties only. In that case, only members of delegations may receive documents relating to such a meeting unless decided otherwise.

Rule 22: Responsibilities of the Chair

(1) The Chair and the Vice-Chairs of the session shall be present, in person, during the meetings, unless exceptional circumstances arise.

(2) The Chair shall exercise the powers of their office in accordance with customary practice. The Chair shall remain under the authority of the meeting.

(3) The Chair shall open and close the meetings, direct the deliberations, ensure that these Rules are applied, give the floor to speakers, put questions to the vote and announce decisions adopted.

(4) The Chair shall ensure that discussion is confined to the point at issue. The Chair may interrupt any speaker who departs therefrom.

Rule 23: Procedural Motions

(1) Speakers on procedural motions and points of order shall be given priority over speakers on the substance but may not then deal with the substance of the matter under discussion.

(2) The following motions shall have precedence, in the order indicated below, over all other proposals or motions:

(a) to suspend a meeting;

(b) to adjourn a meeting;

(c) to adjourn the debate on the question under discussion; and

(d) to close the debate on the question under discussion.

(3) Permission to speak shall be granted only to one speaker in favour of the motion in addition to the proposer and to two speakers against, after which it shall immediately be put to the vote.

(4) During the discussion of any matter a delegate may raise a point of order. The Chair shall immediately decide the point of order in accordance with these Rules.

(5) A delegate may appeal against a ruling of the Chair. The appeal shall be put to the vote and the Chair's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a simple majority.

Rule 24: Substantive Proposals

(1) Substantive proposals shall normally be presented in writing at least 24 hours before their consideration at any meeting.

(2) A proposal may be withdrawn by its author before voting on it has begun if no amendments have been made by other delegates. The proposal may be reintroduced at any time by any delegate.

Rule 25: Reconsideration

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected it may not be reconsidered at the same session unless the Assembly by a two-thirds majority decides in favour of reconsideration. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to one speaker in favour of the motion in addition to the proposer and to two against, after which it shall immediately be put to the vote.

Rule 26: Speeches

(1) No delegate may speak without permission of the Chair. Speakers shall be called upon in the order in which they request the floor.

(2) During the discussion, the Chair may read the list of speakers and declare the closure of that list. Nevertheless, the Chair may grant the right of reply to any delegate when an intervention made after the closure of the list of speakers makes it necessary.

(3) The Chair may limit the time given to each speaker or the number of speeches by each delegation on a given question. When the debate is restricted and a delegate exceeds the time granted the Chair shall call the speaker to order.

Rule 27: Records

(1) The Director General shall prepare records of plenary meetings and of such committee meetings as the Chair of the Assembly may determine. The records shall contain a summary of decisions made during the session as well as statements submitted by representatives in accordance with paragraph (2).

(2) Individual representatives wishing to include in the records the statements made during the discussion shall, before the end of each meeting, submit the complete texts to the Director General.

(3) The records, which shall cover the work of each meeting, shall be approved by the Assembly before the end of the session, and shall be the only official record of the Assembly's proceedings.

(4) After consideration of the draft records of the Assembly, the Directorate shall prepare the final draft records for publication on the IMSO document website, IMSO Docs. Delegations shall have five working days from the date of publication of the final draft records to submit comments by correspondence. Such comments shall be limited to editorial corrections and improvements, including the finalization of individual statements, and shall not reopen discussion on decisions taken during the session. The Chair, with the support of the Directorate, shall facilitate the resolution of any comments received, as necessary. Upon conclusion of the five-day correspondence period, the Directorate, in consultation with the Chair, shall publish a document on IMSO Docs compiling the comments received, together with an explanation of how they were addressed. Once this document has been published, the final report shall be prepared in due course for publication on IMSO Docs. The records of the Assembly, excluding annexes, shall be translated into all official languages and be posted on IMSO Docs.

(5) The audio files of discussions of the meetings in all official languages shall be uploaded onto IMSO Docs as soon as possible after the close of the meeting to which they relate.

PART VII: VOTING

Rule 28: Majority Required

(1) Each Party shall have one vote in the Assembly.

(2) For the purposes of Article 10 of the Convention and of these Rules, the phrase *Parties present and voting* means Parties, casting an affirmative or negative vote, present:

(a) either in person or remotely through hybrid meeting system, in the case of a vote by show of hands or by roll call conducted in accordance with Rule 29(1); and

(b) in person, in the case of a vote by secret ballot conducted in accordance with Rule 29(2).

(3) Parties abstaining from voting or casting an invalid vote shall be considered as not voting. Parties in the session who are not present at the time the voting takes place shall be considered as not present.

(4) Decisions on matters of substance shall be taken by a two-thirds majority, and on procedural matters by a simple majority.

(5) Decisions whether a question is procedural or substantive shall be made by the Chair. Such decisions may be overruled by a two-thirds majority.

(6) Simple and two-thirds majorities are always calculated on the basis of the Parties present and voting.

Rule 29: Method of Voting

(1) Unless technical means are used, or the vote is taken by secret ballot conducted in person only in accordance with Rule 29(2), votes shall be taken by a show of hands or, if any delegate so requests, by roll call. Roll calls shall be taken in the alphabetical order of the English names of the Parties present, beginning with the Party chosen randomly by the Chair.

(2) Voting shall be by secret ballot conducted in person only when at least three delegations so request.

Rule 30: Interruption of the Voting

After the Chair has announced the beginning of a vote, no delegate shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. Delegates may explain their votes after the voting, except when the vote is secret. The Chair may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations.

Rule 31: Voting Upon Parts of a Proposal

(1) A delegate may move part of a proposal or of an amendment which shall be voted on separately.

(2) If objection is made to the request for division, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given only to one speaker in favour in addition to the proposer and two speakers against.

(3) If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment which are subsequently approved shall be put to a vote as a whole.

(4) If all operative parts of the proposal or the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Rule 32: Order of Voting on Amendments

(1) When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of the proposal.

(2) When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the Assembly shall first vote 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 amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote.

(3) If one or more amendments are adopted, the proposal as amended shall then be voted upon.

Rule 33: Order of Voting on Proposals

Several proposals relating to the same question shall be put to the vote in the order in which they are received, unless otherwise decided. After each vote the meeting may decide not to vote on the other proposals. If there are more than two proposals, an indicative vote may be held first.

Rule 34: Equally Divided Votes

If on any issue, other than elections, the votes are equally divided, a second vote shall be taken to a subsequent meeting, which should be held not later than 48 hours after the first vote. If in the second vote the votes are again equally divided, the proposal is regarded as rejected.

PART VIII: MISCELLANEOUS

Rule 35: Appointment and/or reappointment of the Director General

The appointment and/or reappointment of the Director General shall be conducted by the Assembly in accordance with the "Procedures for the Appointment and/or Reappointment of the IMSO Director General"[5] adopted by the Assembly.

Rule 36: Languages

(1) The official languages of the Assembly are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The working language is English.

(2) Speeches made in any of the six official languages shall be interpreted into the five other official languages.

(3) The official language of the subsidiary organs is English.

Rule 37: Amendment of the Rules

The Assembly may amend these Rules by a two-thirds majority. Proposals for amendment shall be considered only at regular sessions and only if they have been included in the provisional agenda in accordance with Rule 8(1).

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[5] The original text of the Procedures for the Appointment and/or Reappointment of the IMSO Director General was adopted by Assembly 14 (February 1999) and subsequently amended by Assembly 18 (October 2006), Assembly 22 (June 2012) and Assembly 29 (December 2024).