



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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136th IPU Assembly

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1- 5 April 2017



Assembly
Item 8
Governing Council
Item 14

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Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

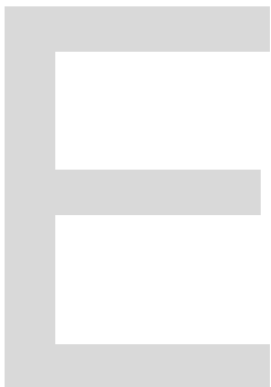
During the 135th IPU Assembly (Geneva, October 2016), the Executive Committee considered a number of amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules. The following amendments are hereby submitted by the Executive Committee to the IPU Assembly and Governing Council, with the recommendation that they be formally adopted at the 136th IPU Assembly in Dhaka.

According to the IPU Statutes and Rules, any amendment proposal shall be submitted in writing at least three months before the meeting of the Assembly and communicated to the Members of the IPU. Any sub-amendments to the Statutes shall be submitted in writing to the IPU Secretariat at least six weeks before the meeting of the Assembly. Sub-amendments to the Rules of the Assembly and the Standing Committees shall be communicated to all Members at least one month before the meeting of the Assembly and Governing Council. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and the Rules of the Assembly are adopted by the Assembly; amendments to the Rules of the Standing Committees and other subsidiary bodies are adopted by the Governing Council.

Statutes	
Article 25.1	25.1 The Executive Committee shall be composed of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, 15 members belonging to different Parliaments and , the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and the President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU.

Comment:

In light of the growing role of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU and the decision by the IPU governing bodies to further mainstream a youth perspective into the work of the Organization, it is recommended that the President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU join the Executive Committee as an ex officio member.



#IPU136

Statutes	
Article 25.2	2. The President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union shall be ex officio President of the Executive Committee. Fifteen members shall be elected by the Governing Council; not less than 12 shall be elected from among the members of the Governing Council to which they shall continue to belong during their mandate. At least three of the members elected must be women. Each sex shall be represented by no less than 30 per cent of the elected members.

Comment:

This amendment aims to bring the Executive Committee in line with IPU's drive towards gender equality, as well as with current practice in other bodies such as the Bureaux of the Standing Committees and IPU specialized committees. The Gender Partnership Group, in cooperation with the Chairs of the Geopolitical Groups, is currently finalizing the modalities for the implementation of this provision.

Rules of the Assembly	
Rule 4	1. The Assembly will meet twice a year and normally last for four days. The second At least one session of the year will shall be held in Geneva, unless the IPU governing bodies decide otherwise. 2. The place and date of each Assembly shall be determined by the Governing Council, if possible one year in advance (cf. Statutes, Art. 21 (b), Assembly Rule 6). The Assembly may only be held in a host country if all IPU Members, Associate Members and Observers are invited and if their representatives shall be granted the visas required for participation by the government of the host country. The convocation of the Assembly shall be sent to all Members of the IPU at least four months before the opening of the session.

Comment:

As the two Assemblies of the year have the same format and similar outcomes, there is no reason to expect that the second Assembly of the year must be held in Geneva (what is important, for budget purposes, is that one of the two annual sessions be held in Geneva, unless a host Parliament agrees to cover the additional costs). The amendment also aims to spell out the IPU's agreed visa policy in the formal Rules of the Assembly.

Rules of the Assembly	
Rule 11.2(a)	(a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major event situation of international concern, on which it appears necessary urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response . Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted.

Comment:

As a result of the 2003 reform of working methods of the IPU, the two previously existing categories of additional agenda items decided by the Assembly through a vote on the spot ("supplementary" and "emergency supplementary" items) were merged into one, but the sense of the "emergency" was lost. The absence of a clear definition of this term in the current Statutes and Rules has occasionally resulted in ambiguous and contradictory situations. It is for this reason that the Executive Committee has decided to rectify the situation.

Rules of the Assembly	
Rule 15.1	1. The Assembly shall start by holding a General Debate with an overall theme. During this General Debate, Members may also address the political, economic and social situation in the world. This debate shall not may give rise to the adoption of an motion or draft resolution outcome document, as decided by the Steering Committee and approved by the IPU Executive Committee.

Comment:

In recent years, the General Debate of the Assembly has often concluded with the adoption of a consensus outcome document. The Executive Committee proposes that this practice be formalized.

Rules of the Standing Committees	
Rule 7.5	5. The Standing Committees shall elect a President and a Vice-President from among the members of their Bureau. The posts of President and Vice-President shall normally be filled at a single election. The geopolitical groups shall coordinate among themselves so as to ensure, to the extent possible, an equitable distribution of the posts of President and Vice-President of Standing Committees.

Comment:

Due to the varying calendar of parliamentary elections among the IPU Members, it is not always possible to synchronize the election of Bureau members, or of Committee President and Vice-Presidents. This formulation offers more flexibility in the election process.

Rule 18	Any Member of the IPU may submit a proposal for a subject item to be discussed by a Standing Committee at a future Assembly. Such proposals shall be deposited with the IPU Secretariat no later than 15 days before the opening of the Assembly preceding the one where the subject will be discussed up to one day prior to the meeting of the respective Standing Committee Bureau.
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Comment:

Practice has shown that, when preparing proposals for subject items to be taken up by the Standing Committees, Members need some time for consultations within and among delegations. This amendment offers the flexibility to do so. It is also consistent with Rule 20.4 of the Standing Committees, according to which, when considering the proposals for subject items to be discussed at future Assemblies, the Bureau may recommend one of the proposals, combine two or more of them dealing with the same subject or related subjects into a single item, put forward another subject item or decide to submit more than one proposal to the Standing Committee.

Financial Regulations	
Rule 5.10	10. Any Member of the IPU whose affiliation was suspended for failure to meet its financial obligations towards the IPU shall remain accountable for these arrears. Should such a Parliament subsequently present a request for reaffiliation earlier than 10 years after the date of its suspension , it shall pay, at the time of its reaffiliation, at least one third of the outstanding arrears and shall present a plan for the settlement of the full remaining amount over a reasonable period of time. Until the full sum is paid, this amount shall remain as a special debt and shall not be considered as arrears under the provisions of Articles 4.2 and 5.2 of the Statutes.

Comment::

The Executive Committee has examined the question of whether, in situations of exceptionally long periods of absence from the IPU, the usual financial conditions for readmitting a previously suspended parliament were to be applied. The Executive Committee has decided to consider adding to the Financial Regulations a "statute of limitations" clause, stipulating after how many years a parliament seeking reaffiliation would be no longer held responsible for the arrears accumulated by its predecessors.