**Rules of Procedure of the Postal Operations Council**

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Article 1

Purpose and functions of the Postal Operations Council

1 The Postal Operations Council (hereinafter "the POC") shall be responsible for all the operational, commercial, technical, economic and technical cooperation issues which are of interest to all the member countries of the Union and their designated operators. Its functions shall derive in particular from the General Regulations[[1]](#footnote-2) and from the relevant decisions of Congress.

2 The work of the POC shall be structured and carried out with a view to implementing the objectives of the Union's strategy and business plan as well as its Programme and Budget.

Article 2

Members of the POC

1 The POC shall consist of 40 members elected by Congress who shall exercise their functions during the period between successive Congresses.

2 Each member of the POC shall appoint its representative in accordance with the General Regulations.[[2]](#footnote-3) This representative may be accompanied by one or more other delegates who shall also be entitled to participate in the discussions and to vote. In line with its national legislation or according to its internal processes, each member country shall notify the International Bureau, before the opening of the session, of its designated representative and of the delegates accompa­nying him. Confirmation of reg­istration and access to sessions of the POC shall be provided only upon validation of the relevant personal information against the official list of delegates duly notified by the competent government authority of a mem­ber of the POC.

3 In the event of doubt about the composition of a member country's delegation, the representative, or his deputy if any, shall decide the matter.

Article 3

Observers and ad hoc observers

1 Observers

1.1 The following entities shall be invited to participate in the plenary sessions and committee meetings of the POC as observers:

1.1.1 representatives of the United Nations;

1.1.2 restricted unions;

1.1.3 members of the Consultative Committee;

1.1.4 entities authorized to attend Union meetings as observers by virtue of a resolution or decision of Congress;[[3]](#footnote-4)

1.1.5 the Chairman of the Council of Administration shall represent that body at meetings of the POC when the agenda contains questions relating to the Council of Administration (hereinafter "the CA");

1.1.6 the Chairman of the Consultative Committee and the chairmen of bodies reporting directly to the POC shall represent those bodies at POC meetings when the agenda contains questions of interest to the Consultative Committee and to these bodies;

1.1.7 representatives of the CA, designated by that Council;

1.1.8 representatives of the Consultative Committee, designated by that Committee;

1.1.9 other member countries of the Union.

1.2 The chairmen of other POC bodies may, after consulting the Chairman of the POC and the Secretary General, authorize the participation of the observers provided for under 1.1 in the meetings of the bodies they chair.

2 Ad hoc observers

2.1 After consultation with the Secretary General and, where appropriate, with the chairman of the body concerned, the Chairman of the POC shall be authorized to invite to plenary sessions, committee meetings and other specific meetings of the POC bodies, as an ad hoc observer, the following enti­ties, when he considers that this is in the interest of the Union or of the POC's work:

2.1.1 specialized agencies of the United Nations;

2.1.2 intergovernmental organizations;

2.1.3 any international body, any association or enterprise, or any qualified person.

2.2 After consultation with the POC Chairman and the Secretary General, the chairmen of other POC bodies shall be authorized to invite ad hoc observers to attend their meetings when this is in the interest of the Union or of the POC's work.

3 Principles

3.1 Observers and ad hoc observers shall not be entitled to vote, but may take the floor with the Chairman's permission.

3.2 Observers and ad hoc observers may, at their request, be allowed to cooperate in the studies under­taken, subject to such conditions as the POC may establish to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of its work. They may also be exceptionally invited to chair standing groups or task forces when their experience or expertise justifies it.

3.3 The participation of observers and ad hoc observers shall be carried out without additional expense for the Union.

3.4 For logistical reasons, the POC may limit the number of attendees per observer and ad hoc observer participating. It may also limit their right to speak during the debates.

3.5 In exceptional circumstances, members of the Consultative Committee and ad hoc observers may be excluded from a meeting or a portion of a meeting in which they have already been invited to participate. Their right to receive documents may also be restricted if the confidentiality of the subject of the meeting or document so requires. This restriction may be decided on a case-by-case basis by any body concerned or its chair. The case-by-case situations shall be reported to the POC, and to the CA when matters of interest to the latter body are concerned.

Article 4

Chairmanships and vice-chairmanships[[4]](#footnote-5)

1 At its constituent meeting, which shall be convened and opened by the Chairman of Congress, the POC shall elect, from among its members, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. It shall choose the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the committees and, if possible, the chairmen of its other bodies. It shall designate its mem­bers to serve as members of the Consultative Committee.

2 The Chairman shall convene the POC, direct the proceedings and approve the Summary Record. He shall also be in overall charge of the work and activity of the POC. If the Chairman of the POC is unable to preside at a session, he shall be replaced by the Vice-Chairman, or, if the Vice-Chairman is also unable to preside, by one of the committee chairmen chosen by themselves or, in the absence of agreement, by lot.

3 The Vice-Chairman shall assist the Chairman of the POC in directing and activating the POC. To this end he shall, among other things, be kept informed about the preparation and programming of the POC ses­sions. He shall follow the progress of and coordinate studies and issues which are assigned to it.

4 The Chairman of the POC may designate another member of the POC to lead part of the delibera­tions, for example the chairman of a committee for discussions relating to certain matters of that committee which, where appropriate, could be dealt with directly in plenary.

Article 5

Structures

1 On the basis of the General Regulations as well as the relevant decisions of Congress, the work of the POC shall be conducted through the following bodies:

* Plenary;
* committees;
* standing groups;
* task forces;
* user-funded subsidiary bodies;
* Management Committee.

2 Notwithstanding the powers of the CA, the POC or the committee concerned shall approve and supervise the specific operating rules of those of its bodies established on a permanent basis (Quality of Service Fund, .POST Group, Postransfer Group, etc.).

3 Participation in standing groups and task forces is open to all members of the POC and shall, in principle, allow the participation of observers and ad hoc observers as per the provisions contained in the General Regulations and article 3 of these Rules of Procedure. All members of the POC shall be entitled to take part in the work of standing groups and task forces as *de jure* members. Information on the mandates and progress of the work of standing groups and task forces shall be made available to the member countries of the Union on the Union's website.

4 In agreement with the CA, the POC may set up joint standing groups or task forces to study issues of interest to both councils, subject also to the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the CA.

Article 6

Plenary

1 The Plenary is the decision-making body which shall approve and take note of the work carried out by the committees as well as any task forces under its direct responsibility, and resolve any issues escalated by such bodies.

Article 7

Committees

1 Committees are decision-making bodies which report directly to the Plenary, as per the specific scope of authority delegated by the latter. Committees are responsible for the implementation and/or monitor­ing of the implementation of all key deliverables derived from Congress decisions in a specific activity area, the approval of the work completed by any standing groups and task forces under their responsibility, and the resolution of any issues escalated by such bodies.

2 Each member of the POC shall be entitled to take part in the work of the committees. However, only POC members which are signatories of an optional agreement (such as the Postal Payment Services Agreement) shall be *de jure* members of the committee dealing exclusively with that agreement.

Article 8

Standing groups

1 Standing groups are the working bodies which are created to accomplish specific tasks to deal with ongoing activities and activities concerning an entire Congress cycle. Standing groups shall report to their respective committees.

2 With the participation of other international organizations, the POC may also set up standing groups in the form of contact committees or other joint bodies to deal with problems of mutual interest. In such cases, the POC shall designate its members to represent the Union. Contact committees or other joint bodies may exceptionally meet at locations other than the Union headquarters in Berne, Switzerland.

Article 9

Task forces

1 Task forces are working bodies which are created to accomplish short-term key deliverables which cannot reasonably be completed by a committee or standing group. Depending on their mandates, task forces can report to the Plenary or a committee.

2 Task forces shall be limited in number and may be created under a committee (with specific man­dates, objectives, deliverables and time frames), subject to the approval of the Plenary and in line with the Union's strategy and business plan, its Programme and Budget, and the POC work pro­gramme for a Congress cycle. In this regard, the specific terms of reference of a task force shall be approved by the Plenary. Task forces shall be disbanded once their assignment is completed or is suspended by the Plenary. Any exceptional extension of a task force's lifespan shall also be subject to plenary approval.

Article 10

User-funded subsidiary bodies

1 In accordance with article 152 of the General Regulations, the POC shall establish its user-funded subsidiary bodies, funded by voluntary means, in order to organize operational, commercial, technical and economic activities which fall within its competence under article 18 of the Constitution, but which may not be financed by the regular budget of the Union.

2 Participation in user-funded subsidiary bodies is subject to the respective rules of proce­dure of those bodies.

Article 11

Management Committee

1 The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the POC as well as the chairmen and vice-chairmen of its committees shall constitute the Management Committee, which shall meet at the request of the Chairman of the POC. At the request of the Chairman of the POC, the Chairmen of the CA and of the Consultative Committee may be invited to take part, as observers, in the meetings of the Management Committee. The Chairman of the POC may invite, as observers, the chairmen of other POC bodies and the representatives of member countries of the Union when questions concerning them are discussed. The Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General of the POC shall attend the meetings of the Management Committee.

2 The Management Committee shall prepare the work of each session and monitor the progress of the work of the POC and of its bodies. It shall assist the Chairman of the POC in drawing up the agenda of the plenary meetings and in coordinating the work of the bodies.

3 The Management Committee shall perform all such tasks as the POC may decide to entrust to it or the need for which arises during the strategic planning process.

4 Article 29.1 of these Rules of Procedure shall not apply to meetings of the Management Committee.

Article 12

Secretariat

1 The functions of Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General of the POC shall be exercised by the Director General and the Deputy Director General of the International Bureau respectively. The International Bureau shall act as secretariat of the POC.

2 The Secretary General of the POC shall:

2.1 prepare the work of the POC and make available to member countries, designated operators, observers and ad hoc observers, on the UPU website all the documents requiring a decision or examination by the POC or its committees on the occasion of each POC session at least 20 working days before the beginning of the session, and shall announce the publication of new electronic doc­uments by means of an appropriate, efficient system;

2.2 take part in the discussions of the POC and its bodies without the right to vote; he may also be represented;

2.3 notify all the member countries of the Union and their designated operators of the Regulations drawn up or amended by the POC;

2.4 inform the member countries of the Union and their designated operators, the restricted unions and the members of the Consultative Committee about the activities of the POC and in particular shall send them, after approval by the Chairman of the POC, a Summary Record and the resolutions and decisions of the POC;

2.5 prepare, and submit to the Chairman of the POC for approval, the annual report on the work of the POC prepared for the CA;

2.6 send to the member countries of the Union and their designated operators, and to observers and ad hoc observers, at least two months before the opening of Congress, the comprehensive report on the work of the POC approved by the latter;

2.7 maintain contact with the CA and submit to the POC such questions as the CA may decide to entrust to it;

2.8 implement the decisions of the POC in accordance with the latter's directives;

2.9 prepare the draft Strategic Plan, the draft Programme and Budget and the draft annual operating plan and submit them to the POC;

2.10 draw up the financial reports relating to the execution of the Strategic Plan and submit them to the POC;

2.11 prepare regular reports on execution of the Programme and Budget and the annual operating plan and submit them to the POC;

2.12 dispose, by agreement with the Chairman of the POC, of the current business of the POC.

3 The POC may instruct the Secretary General to study special subjects; in order to simplify manage­ment, certain functions may be delegated to him.

4 The Secretary General shall also undertake inquiries requested by the bodies of the POC in appli­cation of the General Regulations.[[5]](#footnote-6) He shall notify the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the POC and the chair­man of the body concerned thereof, and make the results obtained available to them and to members of the bodies concerned.

5 The International Bureau shall:

5.1 draft the reports of the bodies of the POC, as well as the Summary Record;

5.2 prepare correspondence and maintain archives.

Article 13

Sessions and organization of meetings[[6]](#footnote-7)

1 In principle, the POC shall meet twice a year at the headquarters of the Union, for a maximum total period of 10 working days.[[7]](#footnote-8) The Plenary shall fix the approximate date and duration of its next session. If compelled by circumstances, the Chairman of the POC, with the prior agreement of the Chairman of the CA and the Secretary General, may alter the date or duration which has been fixed, provided the alteration is notified to the members of the POC at least two weeks before the opening of the session.

2 The POC may meet, exceptionally, when a request for this is made or approved by at least one third of its members or on the initiative of its Chairman. The date shall be fixed by the Chairman in agreement with the Chairman of the CA and the Secretary General.

3 At each session, the POC shall:

3.1 exchange views on completed or current work and make, if necessary, recommendations on it;

3.2 approve the timetable drawn up, by agreement with the chairmen of the bodies concerned and after consulting the Secretary General, of the meetings which will be held until the next session. Any meeting envisaged outside this timetable shall, if it involves additional expenditure, be authorized by the Chairman of the POC after consultation with the Secretary General;

3.3 approve the annual operating plan (or any revisions thereto) and the reports on its execution, on the basis of the proposals made to it by the member countries and/or by the International Bureau or in the light of changes made to the Union's strategy and its Programme and Budget;

3.4 formulate proposals for the CA with a view to updating the Programme and Budget on the basis of proposals made to it by its bodies or by the Secretary General.

4 Between POC sessions, standing groups and task forces shall, as a general rule, carry out their work using online collaboration and remote participation tools (e.g. digital work spaces and web conferences). If necessary, they may exceptionally hold physical meetings at the Union headquarters in Berne, Switzerland. In accordance with article 8, standing groups such as contact committees or other joint bodies may exception­ally meet at locations other than the Union headquarters in Berne, Switzerland.

5 Without prejudice to paragraph 3.2, the dates of meetings of standing groups or task forces organized outside sessions shall be set by the chairmen of the bodies concerned after consultation with the Secretary General. Any documents produced by standing groups or task forces with the aim of reporting completed deliverables or requesting a decision by the Plenary or a committee shall be processed as official POC session documents as long as they comply with the six-week submission deadline referred to in article 15. However, any other documents produced and shared between sessions for the sole purpose of carrying out the tasks of standing groups or task forces shall not be processed as official POC session documents, although they may be made available to countries through the collaborative spaces.

Article 14

Order of seating

1 At meetings of the POC, delegations shall be seated in the French alphabetical order of members.

2 The Chairman of the POC shall draw lots, in due course, for the name of the country to be placed foremost before the Chairman's rostrum at each session of the POC.

Article 15

Agenda

1 The Chairman shall make out, at the proposal of or after consultation with the Secretary General, the provisional agenda for each plenary session, giving priority to points requiring a decision. This agenda shall be sent to the members of the POC and to the observers and ad hoc observers at the same time as the invitation to attend.

2 Each chairman of a body shall also prepare, on the proposal of or after consultation with the Secretary General, the agenda of the meetings of his body, in accordance with the principles set out under 1.

3 The following subjects, inter alia, shall appear in the provisional agenda of the POC:

3.1 matters selected at the previous session;

3.2 questions submitted as documents by members of the POC, other member countries of the Union or by the CA between sessions and notified to the Secretary General at least six weeks before the opening of the session during which they are to be considered; documents transmitted to the Secretary General less than six weeks before the opening of the session may be considered only if the POC so decides by a majority of the members present and voting;

3.3 suggestions and proposals submitted by the Director General of the International Bureau.

Article 16

Preparation and conditions of acceptance of new Regulations

1 The Regulations of the Universal Postal Convention and of the optional agreements (such as the Postal Payment Services Agreement) shall be drawn up by the POC in the light of the decisions taken by Congress.

2 Proposals that are consequential to proposed amendments to the Convention or the optional agree­ments (such as the Postal Payment Services Agreement) shall be submitted to the International Bureau sim­ultaneously with the Congress proposals to which they relate. They may be submitted by a single member country of the Union without the sup­port of other member countries. These proposals shall be distributed to all member countries no later than one month prior to Congress.

3 Other proposals concerning the Regulations for consideration by the POC in its preparation of the new Regulations within the six months following Congress shall be submitted to the International at least two months before Congress.

4 Following the close of Congress, the International Bureau shall review the decisions taken by Congress with a view toward identifying all consequential changes in the Regulations necessary as a result of omissions or unanticipated Congress decisions. The International Bureau shall formulate proposals concern­ing the necessary changes and shall distribute a report of the results of this review and the proposals to all member countries no later than one month before the opening of the POC.

5 Proposals concerning Regulations, changes necessary as a result of omissions or unanticipated Congress decisions that are submitted by member countries of the Union shall reach the International Bureau not later than two months before the opening of the POC. These proposals shall be distributed to all member countries not later than one month before the opening of the POC.

6 Every proposal shall have only one aim and contain only the changes justified by that aim.

7 Amendments to proposals for amending the Regulations shall be handed in to the International Bureau in writing at least one day before the meeting at which they are to be considered. This time limit shall not apply to amendments resulting directly from discussions in the Plenary or in a committee.

Article 17

Revision of the Regulations

1 Proposals concerning the Regulations submitted to the POC between two Congresses by member countries of the Union (with the support of at least one member country of the Union) shall be notified to the Secretary General at least six weeks before the opening of the session at which they are to be considered. Proposals notified to the Secretary General less than six weeks before the opening of the session may be considered only if the POC so decides by a majority of the members present and voting.

2 Proposals stemming from studies conducted by bodies on behalf of POC committees shall also be subject to paragraph 1 above when they relate to the rules that have financial consequences or involve the responsibilities of member countries of the Union and/or designated operators.

3 Amendments to proposals for amending the Regulations shall be handed in to the International Bureau in writing at least one day before the meeting at which they are to be considered. This time limit shall not apply to amendments resulting directly from discussions in the Plenary or in a committee.

4 The Regulations shall be authenticated by the Chairman of the POC and the Secretary General.

5 If the same question is the subject of several proposals, the Chairman shall decide the order in which they are to be discussed, starting as a rule with the proposal which departs most from the basic text and entails the most significant change in relation to the status quo.

6 If a proposal can be subdivided into several parts, each part may, if the originator of the proposal or the assembly so agrees, be considered and voted upon separately.

7 Any proposal withdrawn in plenary or in committee by its originator may be resubmitted by the dele­gation of another member country of the Union. Similarly, if an amendment to a proposal is accepted by the originator of the proposal, another delegation may resubmit the original, unamended proposal.

8 Any amendment to a proposal which is accepted by the delegation submitting the proposal shall be immediately included in the text thereof. If the originator of the original proposal does not accept an amend­ment, the Chairman of the meeting shall decide whether the amendment or the proposal shall be voted upon first, starting with whichever departs furthest from the meaning or intent of the basic text and entails the most significant change in relation to the status quo.

9 The procedure described in paragraph 8 shall also apply where more than one amendment to a proposal is submitted.

Article 18

Finalization of the Regulations

1 The International Bureau shall be authorized to correct in the Regulations any clerical errors which have not come to light at the time of approval of the Regulations, the numbering of articles and paragraphs, and references.

Article 19

Debates

1 Delegates may not take the floor until they have been given permission to do so by the Chairman of the meeting.

2 Unless a majority of the members present and voting decides otherwise, speeches shall not exceed five minutes. The Chairman shall be authorized to interrupt any speaker who exceeds the said authorized time. He may also ask the delegate not to depart from the subject.

3 During a debate, the Chairman of the meeting may, with the agreement of the majority of the mem­bers present and voting, declare the list of speakers closed after reading it out. When the list is exhausted, he shall declare the debate closed, although even after the closing of the list he may grant the originator of the proposal under discussion the right to reply to any of the speeches delivered.

4 The Chairman may also, with the agreement of the majority of the members present and voting, limit the number of speeches by any one delegation on a proposal or a certain group of proposals; but the originator of the proposal shall be given the opportunity of introducing it and speaking subsequently if he asks to do so in order to make new points in reply to the speeches of other delegations, so that he may, if he wishes, be the last speaker.

5 With the agreement of the majority of the members present and voting, the Chairman may limit the number of speeches on a proposal or a certain group of proposals; but this limit may not be less than five for and five against the proposal under discussion.

Article 20

Reservations to the Regulations revised by the Postal Operations Council

1 Reservations to the Regulations shall take the form of proposals submitted in writing and concern­ing the Final Protocols of the said Regulations.

2 Reservations shall be submitted in the form of proposals to the International Bureau in one of the Union's working languages (proposals concerning the Final Protocol).[[8]](#footnote-9)

3 Subject to paragraphs 1 and 2, reservations proposed after the final adoption of the Regulations and their Final Protocol shall be considered by the POC at its following session. However, should that session be held after the date of the entry into force of the provisions which are to be the subject of the reservations, the Management Committee shall be authorized to adopt such reservations provisionally.

4 Member countries wishing to maintain existing reservations shall not be obliged to resubmit pro­posals for this purpose. The International Bureau shall automatically carry over the reservations appearing in the preceding Final Protocols unless the beneficiary country declares that it is waiving them.

5 Reservations shall be included on the agenda of the Plenary, and sufficient time shall be allowed for their discussion.

6 The reservations shall be approved by a majority of the members having the right to vote.

Article 21

Urgent questions raised between sessions

1 Urgent questions raised between sessions shall be dealt with by the Chairman of the POC.

2 If the questions relate to matters of principle, the Chairman of the POC shall consult the members of the POC and, if he thinks fit, all the member countries of the Union; he shall inform the members consulted of the solutions arrived at.

Article 22

Languages

1 The official language of the POC shall be French.

2 For the discussions of the POC and its bodies mentioned in article 5.1, Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish may be used, by means of a simultaneous interpretation system. The POC members listed below have chosen to use one of these languages:

| *French* | *English* | *Arabic* | *Spanish* | *Russian* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Belgium  France  Morocco  Senegal  Switzerland | Australia  Austria  Azerbaijan  Bangladesh  Canada  Finland  Georgia  Germany  Ghana  India  Italy  Japan  Kenya  Korea (Rep.)  Netherlands  New Zealand  Poland  Romania  Singapore  Tanzania (United Rep.)  Thailand  United Kingdom  United States of America | Egypt  Tunisia | Argentina  Chile  Cuba  Spain  Uruguay | Russian Federation |

3 The cost of the interpretation services in the languages mentioned in paragraph 2 shall, in principle, be divided into five equal parts, each borne by the members of the POC and the member countries participating in these meetings as observers, in application of article 3, which have chosen to use the same language, in proportion to their contribution to the expenses of the Union. However, if interpretation into one of the lan­guages laid down in paragraph 2 is not used for a session of the POC or for an interim meeting of one of its bodies, and provided the Union has not yet entered into any commitments in this regard, the costs shall be shared equally between the other languages mentioned in paragraph 2 used at the meeting.

4 If members of the POC wish to use other languages,[[9]](#footnote-10) they shall provide for simultaneous interpreta­tion into Arabic, English, French, Russian or Spanish, either by the system indicated in paragraph 2, when the necessary technical modifications can be made, or by private interpreters. New requests for the use of other languages shall be sent to the International Bureau at least six months before the opening of the meeting in question.

5 Between sessions of the POC, any POC member country or any other member country participating in its meetings as an observer wishing to change its language of discussion shall inform the International Bureau. These invited member countries shall indicate their chosen language when they announce that they will participate in the session.

Article 23

Quorum

1 POC meetings shall only be valid if at least half of the members of the POC having the right to vote are present.

2 For the committees dealing exclusively with optional agreements (such as the Postal Payment Services Agreement), the quorum shall be half the members of the POC which are parties to the agreement to which the respective issues relate and which have the right to vote.

3 For voting on the Regulations of the Convention, the quorum required shall be a majority of the members of the POC having the right to vote.

4 For voting on the Regulations of the optional agreements (such as the Postal Payment Services Agreement), the quorum required shall be a majority of the POC members which are parties to the agreement to which the respective issues relate and which have the right to vote.

Article 24

Voting

1 Subject to the sanctions provided for in the General Regulations,[[10]](#footnote-11) each member of the POC shall have one vote. Without prejudice to the exceptional representation possibility outlined in paragraph 2, proxies shall not be admitted.

2 If a member of the POC, present at a session, is prevented from attending a meeting, it may excep­tionally delegate its right to vote to the representative of another member, provided it gives previous notice in writing to the Chairman of the POC. However, a member of the POC may not represent more than one country other than its own.

3 Questions which cannot be settled by common consent shall be decided by a majority of members present and voting. In the event of a tie, the proposal shall be considered as rejected. When the number of abstentions and blank or null and void ballot papers exceeds half the number of votes cast (for, against and abstentions), consideration of the matter shall be deferred until a subsequent meeting, at which abstentions and blank or null and void ballot papers shall be disregarded.

4 Proposals relating to the Regulations of the Convention shall be approved by a majority of the mem­bers of the POC having the right to vote. For proposals concerning the Regulations of the optional agreements (such as the Postal Payment Services Agreement), the majority required shall be a majority of the POC mem­bers which are parties to the agreement to which the vote relates and which have the right to vote.

5 The voting methodology shall be decided before the voting begins. Voting may be:

5.1 by show of hands;

5.2 by roll-call: at the request of a member of the POC or by the choice of the Chairman. The roll shall be called in the French alphabetical order of the countries represented on the POC;

5.3 by secret ballot: at the request of two members of the POC. The necessary measures shall then be taken to ensure the correct operation of this procedure, whether the vote is done electronically or through traditional paper ballots; this shall have priority over other voting procedures.

6 The expression "members present and voting" shall mean members voting "for" or "against". Abstentions shall not be taken into consideration in counting the votes which are indispensable for ascertaining the majority; the same shall apply to blank or spoilt ballot papers in the event of a secret ballot.

7 Once the voting has begun, no delegation may interrupt it, except to raise a point of order relating to technical aspects of the voting procedure.

8 The voting rules shall apply to decisions taken by the Plenary or by the committees, as well as, by analogy, by other POC bodies, subject to specific operating rules.

Article 25

Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

1 In principle, the Chairman of the POC shall come from a different geographical group from that of the Chairman of the CA.

2 In principle, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the POC may not be from the same geographical group. They may not be two developed or two developing countries.

3 The elections of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the POC shall take place by secret ballot. The candidate obtaining a majority of the votes as defined in article 24.3 and 6, shall be elected. As many ballots shall be held as are necessary to obtain this majority.

4 The candidate or, in the event of a tie, the candidates obtaining the fewest votes in any one ballot shall be eliminated. If several candidates do not obtain at least 10% of the votes cast in a ballot, all these candidates shall be eliminated.

5 Candidates may withdraw before each ballot.

Article 26

Motions on points of order and procedural motions

1 During the discussion of any question and even, where appropriate, after the closure of the debate, a delegation may submit a motion on a point of order for the purpose of requesting:

1.1 clarification on the conduct of the debates;

1.2 observance of the Rules of Procedure;

1.3 a change in the order of discussion of proposals suggested by the Chairman.

2 The motion on a point of order shall take precedence over all questions, including the procedural motions set forth in paragraph 4.

3 The Chairman shall immediately give the desired clarifications or take the decision which he consid­ers advisable on the subject of the motion on a point of order. In the event of an objection, the Chairman's decision shall be put to the vote forthwith.

4 In addition, during discussion of a question, a delegation may introduce a procedural motion with a view to proposing:

4.1 the suspension of the meeting;

4.2 the closure of the meeting;

4.3 the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion;

4.4 the closure of the debate on the question under discussion.

5 Procedural motions shall take precedence, in the order set out above, over all other proposals except the motions on points of order referred to in paragraph 1.

6 Motions for the suspension or closure of the meeting shall not be discussed, but shall be put to the vote immediately.

7 When a delegation proposes adjournment or closure of the debate on a question under discussion, only two speakers against the adjournment or the closure of the debate may speak, after which the motion shall be put to the vote.

8 The delegation which submits a motion on a point of order or a procedural motion may not, in its submission, deal with the substance of the question under discussion. The proposer of a procedural motion may withdraw it before it has been put to the vote and any motion of this kind, whether amended or not, which is so withdrawn may be reintroduced by another delegation.

Article 27

Reopening of decisions

1 When a decision has been taken by the Plenary or by a committee, the question may only be recon­sidered if the Plenary approves the principle of such reconsideration. Approval of reopening discussion shall require the majorities laid down in article 2.3, 4 and 6.

Article 28

Reports

1 The bodies of the POC shall prepare, for the attention of the POC, reports briefly describing the progress of the work provided for in the Union Programme and Budget, the POC work programme and its related annual operating plans.

2 The POC shall prepare for the CA an annual report on its work.

3 The POC shall make to Congress a comprehensive report on its work, includ­ing reports on user-funded subsidiary bodies as provided for in the General Regulations,[[11]](#footnote-12) and send it to the member countries, their designated operators and the members of the Consultative Committee at least two months before the opening of Congress.

Article 29

Refund of travelling expenses to representatives of member countries of the POC and its bodies

1 In accordance with the General Regulations,[[12]](#footnote-13) the representative of each member country of the POC considered to be disadvantaged according to the lists established by the United Nations and participating in meetings of the POC and its bodies, except for meetings held during Congress, shall be entitled to reim­bursement of the cost of an economy-class return air ticket or first-class return rail ticket, or expenses incurred for travel by any other means subject to the condition that the amount does not exceed the price of the econ­omy-class air return ticket.

2 Pursuant to paragraph 1, the following provisions shall be observed:

2.1 if one of the member countries of the POC to which paragraph 1 refers is represented by the same person or by different persons at the session of the POC and at meetings of its bodies sitting in the same place during the period preceding or following the session, the fare shall only be refunded once;

2.2 if one of the member countries of the POC to which paragraph 1 refers is convened and is repre­sented by the same person or by different persons, in the interval between sessions of the POC, at meetings of bodies sitting in the same place within a period not exceeding 30 days for all the meet­ings, the fare shall only be refunded once.

3 The travelling expenses of the representatives of an international organization, or of any other per­sons whom the POC wishes to associate with its work, can only be charged to the Union in exceptional cases and with the prior agreement of the Chairman of the POC, of the Chairman of the CA and of the Secretary General. This shall also apply to the travelling expenses of representatives of countries which are not members of the POC but which the latter expressly desires to associate with its work and which form part of the member countries considered to be disadvantaged referred to in the General Regulations.

Article 30

Effective date

1 These Rules of Procedure shall come into effect immediately.

So adopted at Berne, 1 February 2019.

For the Postal Operations Council:

Masahiko Metoki Bishar A. Hussein

Chairman representative Secretary General

1. Article 113 of the General Regulations. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Article 112.3 of the General Regulations. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. African Union (C 92/1974), League of Arab States (C 7/1979), Palestine (C 115/1999) and European Union (C 78/  
   2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The terms "Chairman" and "Vice-Chairman" shall always refer to the countries which were elected to those offices. In due observance of article 114 of the General Regulations, the term "Chairman" shall equally apply to co-chairmen of POC bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Articles 113.1.9 and 132.3 of the General Regulations. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Without prejudice to the physical presence requirement for the purposes of quorum calculation and voting at meetings of decision-making bodies of the POC, members of the POC and observers may also benefit from direct broadcasting (with or without interpretation) and remote participation tools in specific meeting halls of the Union’s headquarters in Berne, Switzerland. The International Bureau can provide further details concerning these arrangements upon request. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Without prejudice to article 114 of the General Regulations, this biannual scheduling of POC sessions is in accordance with Istanbul Congress resolution C 27/2016. As per the same resolution, the maximum total period of 10 working days refers to both POC sessions considered together. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Proposed reservations to the Regulations may be submitted by member countries at any time during a Congress cycle, subject to the relevant formal requirements referred to herein. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. In accordance with article 155 of the General Regulations, the following countries have opted for languages other than those listed in paragraph 2:

   |  |  |  |  |
   | --- | --- | --- | --- |
   | *Turkish* | *Chinese* | *Japanese* | *Portuguese* |
   | Turkey | China (People's Rep.) | Japan | Brazil  Portugal |

   [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Article 149 of the General Regulations. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Article 152 of the General Regulations. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Article 116 of the General Regulations. For the purposes of this provision, it may be noted that the only list of "disadvantaged" countries established by the United Nations is that of least developed countries. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)