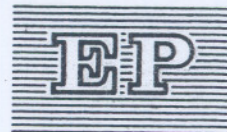




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GOVERNING COUNCIL

Fourth session

Nairobi, 30 March - 14 April 1976

Item 10 of the provisional agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3337 (XXIX): INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

Note by the Executive Director

1. The Governing Council, in its capacity as the intergovernmental preparatory body for the United Nations Conference on Desertification, is invited to consider the attached Draft Provisional Rules of Procedure for the Conference. If they are agreed to by the Governing Council, they will be presented to the Conference for adoption under item 2 of its provisional agenda.
2. The Executive Director wishes to draw attention to rule 45 of the draft provisional rules of procedure which includes Arabic among the working languages of the Conference. Should the Governing Council agree with this proposal, it may wish to recommend to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session that it authorize such inclusion.

Chapter I

REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Composition of delegations

Rule 1

The delegation of each State participating in the Conference shall consist of the head of delegation and no more than two other accredited representatives and such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

Alternates or advisers

Rule 2

An alternate representative or an adviser may act as a representative upon designation by the head of delegation.

Submission of credentials

Rule 3

The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the Secretary-General of the Conference before the date fixed for the opening of the Conference. Credentials shall be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Credentials Committee

Rule 4

A Credentials Committee shall be appointed at the beginning of the Conference. Its composition shall be based on that of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly at its thirty-first regular session. It shall examine the credentials of representatives and report to the Conference without delay.

Provisional participation in the Conference

Rule 5

Pending a decision of the Conference upon their credentials, representatives shall be entitled to participate provisionally in the Conference.

Chapter II

OFFICERS

Election

Rule 6

The Conference shall elect the following officers: a President, no more than 30 Vice-Presidents, a Rapporteur-General and the Chairmen of the Committee and other sessional bodies established in accordance with rule 41. Each Committee and other sessional body shall elect its own Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur.

President

Rule 7

The President shall be responsible for the general conduct of business in the plenary meetings of the Conference. The President, in the exercise of his functions, remains under the authority of the Conference.

Acting President

Rule 8

In case of absence from a meeting or any part thereof, the President shall designate a Vice-President to take his place. A Vice-President acting as President shall have the same powers and duties as the President.

The President shall not vote

Rule 9

The President, or Vice-President acting as President, shall not vote, but may appoint another member of his delegation to vote in his place.

Chapter III

SECRETARIAT

Rule 10

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, or the Secretary-General of the Conference, shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies. Either may designate a member of the Secretariat to act in his place at these meetings.

Rule 11

The Secretary-General of the United Nations or the Secretary-General of the Conference, or any member of the Secretariat designated by either for that purpose, may make statements concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 12

The Secretary-General of the Conference shall direct the staff required by the Conference.

Rule 13

The Secretariat shall be responsible for translating, reproducing and distributing the official documents, reports and resolutions of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies; interpreting speeches made at the meetings; keeping sound recordings of the public meetings of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies; having the custody and preservation of the documents in the archives of the United Nations; publishing the report of the Conference; and, generally, performing all other work which the Conference may require.

Chapter IV

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Quorum

Rule 14

A quorum shall be constituted when representatives of a majority of the States participating in the Conference are present.

General powers of the President

Rule 15

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him elsewhere by these rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of each plenary meeting of the Conference; direct the discussions at such meetings; accord the right to speak; put questions to the vote and announce decisions. The President shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules of procedure, have complete control of the proceedings and over the maintenance of order thereat. The President may propose to the Conference the limitation of time to be allowed to speakers, the limitation of the number of times each representative may speak on any question, the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. The President may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the debate on any question under discussion.

Speeches

Rule 16

No person may address the Conference without having previously obtained the permission of the President. Subject to rules 17 and 18 the President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The President may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

Precedence

Rule 17

The Chairman or Rapporteur of a committee or other sessional body may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusions arrived at by the committee or sessional body concerned.

Points of order

Rule 18

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may rise to a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the President in accordance with the rules of procedure. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives present and voting. A representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Time-limit on speeches

Rule 19

The Conference may limit the time to be allowed to each speaker and the number of times each representative may speak on any question. When the debate is limited and a representative has spoken his allotted time, the President shall call him to order without delay.

Closing of list of speakers

Rule 20

During the course of a debate the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Conference, declare the list closed. He may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if a speech delivered after he has declared the list closed makes this desirable.

Adjournment of debate

Rule 21

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one representative may speak in favour of, and one against, the motion, after which the motion shall immediately be put to the vote.

Closure of debate

Rule 22

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the question under discussion, whether or not any other representative has signified his wish to speak. Permission to speak on the closure of the debate shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the closure, after which the motion shall immediately be put to the vote. If the Conference is in favour of the closure, the President shall declare the closure of the debate.

Suspension or adjournment of the meeting

Rule 23

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. Such motion shall not be debated, but shall immediately be put to the vote.

Order of procedural motions

Rule 24

Subject to rule 18, the following motions shall have precedence over all other proposals or motions before the meeting, and shall be put to the vote in the following order regardless of the order of their submission:

- (a) To suspend the meeting;
- (b) To adjourn the meeting;
- (c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion;
- (d) To close the debate on the question under discussion.

Proposals and amendments

Rule 25

Proposals and amendments shall normally be submitted in writing and presented to the Secretary-General of the Conference who shall circulate copies to the delegations. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Conference unless copies of it have been circulated in all languages of the Conference not later than the day preceding the meeting. The President may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of proposals or amendments even though these proposals or amendments have not been circulated in all languages of the Conference or have only been circulated the same day.

Decisions on competence

Rule 26

Subject to rule 24, any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Conference to discuss any matter or to adopt a proposal or amendment submitted to it, shall be put to the vote before the matter is discussed or a vote is taken on the proposal or amendment in question.

Withdrawal of motions

Rule 27

A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended. A motion which has thus been withdrawn may be reintroduced by any representative.

Reconsideration of proposals

Rule 23

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered unless the Conference, by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded to only two speakers opposing the motion, after which it shall immediately be put to the vote.

Chapter V

VOTING

Voting rights

Rule 29

Each State represented at the Conference shall have one vote.

Required majority

Rule 30

1. Decisions of the Conference on all matters of substance shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting.
2. Decisions of the Conference on matters of procedure shall be taken by a majority of the representatives present and voting.
3. If the question arises whether a matter is one of procedure or of substance, the President of the Conference shall rule on the question. An appeal against this ruling shall immediately be put to the vote, and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives present and voting.

Meaning of the expression "representatives
present and voting"

Rule 31

For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "representatives present and voting" means representatives present and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives who abstain shall be regarded as not voting.

Method of voting

Rule 32

The Conference shall normally vote by show of hands, but any representative may request a roll call. The roll call shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the States participating in the Conference, beginning with the delegation whose name is drawn by lot by the President.

Conduct during voting

Rule 33

After the President has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connexion with the actual conduct of the voting. The President may permit representatives to explain their votes, either before or after the voting. The President may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations.

Division of proposals and amendments

Rule 34

A representative may move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment shall be voted on separately. 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 to only two speakers in favour and two speakers against. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment that are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal or of the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Voting on amendments

Rule 35

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 Conference shall vote first 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 the 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. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

Voting on proposals

Rule 36

If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the Conference, unless it decides otherwise, shall vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted.

Elections

Rule 37

All elections shall be held by secret ballot unless otherwise decided by the Conference.

Rule 38

1. When one person is to be elected and no candidate obtains a majority of votes of the representatives present and voting in the first ballot, a second ballot restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes shall be taken. If, in the second ballot, the votes are equally divided, the decision between the candidates shall be made by the drawing of lots.

2. In the case of a tie in the first ballot among three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes, a second ballot shall be held. If in the second ballot a tie results among more than two candidates, their number shall be reduced to two by lot, and the balloting, restricted to them, shall continue in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

Rule 39

When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining a majority of votes of the representatives present and voting in the first ballot shall be elected. If the number of candidates obtaining such a majority is more than the number of places to be filled, those candidates obtaining the largest number of votes shall be elected. If the number of candidates obtaining such a majority is less than the number of persons to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places. The voting, however, shall be restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot, to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled, provided that after the third inconclusive ballot votes may be cast for any eligible person or delegation. If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots shall be restricted to the candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes in the third of the unrestricted ballots, to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled. The three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted, and so on, until all the places have been filled.

Equally divided votes

Rule 40

If a vote is equally divided on matters other than elections, the proposal or amendment shall be regarded as rejected.

Chapter VI

COMMITTEES

Establishment of committees and other sessional bodies

Rule 41

In addition to the Credentials Committee, the Conference may establish such committees and other sessional bodies as may be required for the performance of its functions. Each committee or sessional body may set up working groups.

Representation on the committees
and other sessional bodies

Rule 42

Each State participating in the Conference may be represented by one representative on each committee and other sessional body of which it is a member. It may assign to these committees and other sessional bodies such alternative representatives and advisers as may be required.

Quorum

Rule 43

One third of the representatives on a committee or other sessional body shall constitute a quorum. The presence of a majority of the members of the committee or other sessional body is, however, required for a question to be put to the vote.

Officers, conduct of business and voting
in committees and other sessional bodies

Rule 44

The rules contained in chapters II, IV and V above shall be applicable mutatis mutandis, to the proceedings of committees and other sessional bodies, except that decisions of committees or other sessional bodies shall be taken by a simple majority of the representatives present and voting. In the case of reconsideration of proposals or amendments, however, the majority required shall be that established by rule 20.

Chapter VII

LANGUAGES AND RECORDS

Languages of the Conference

Rule 45

Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the languages of the Conference.

Interpretation from a language of the Conference

Rule 46

Speeches made in any one of the languages of the Conference shall be interpreted into the other languages of the Conference.

Interpretation from other languages

Rule 47

Any representative may make a speech in a language other than the language of the Conference. In this case he shall himself provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the Conference. Interpretation into the other languages of the Conference by the interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first language of the Conference.

Language of official documents

Rule 48

Official documents of the Conference shall be made available in the languages of the Conference.

Sound recordings of meetings

Rule 49

Sound recordings of meetings of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies shall be kept by the Secretariat in accordance with the practice of the United Nations.

Chapter VIII

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEETINGS

Plenary meetings and meetings of committees and other sessional bodies

Rule 50

The plenary meetings of the Conference and meetings of committees and other sessional bodies shall be held in public unless the body concerned decides otherwise.

Meetings of working groups

Rule 51

Meetings of working groups will ordinarily be held in private, unless the body concerned decides otherwise.

Communiqués to the press

Rule 52

At the close of any private meeting, the Conference, committee or other sessional body concerned may decide to issue a communiqué to the press through the Secretary-General of the Conference.

Chapter IX

REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES
AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Rule 53

Representatives of the United Nations specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies upon the invitation of the President or Chairman, as the case may, on questions within the scope of their activities.

Chapter X

OBSERVERS

Observers for intergovernmental organizations
outside the United Nations system

Rule 54

Observers for intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies upon the invitation of the President or Chairman, as the case may be, on questions within the scope of their activities.

Observers for non-governmental organizations

Rule 55

Non-governmental organizations invited to the Conference may designate authorized representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies.

Upon the invitation of the President or Chairman, as the case may be, and subject to the approval of the body concerned, these representatives may make oral statements on questions within the scope of their activities.

Written statements submitted by these non-governmental organizations on subjects in which they have a special competence and which are related to the items on the agenda of the Conference, will be circulated by the Secretariat in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements were made available to the Secretariat for distribution.