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Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

Fifth session

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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Provisional rules of procedure¹

I. Definitions

Meaning of terms

Rule 1

For the purposes of these rules, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

- (a) “Committee” or “Committee of Experts” means the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management”, established in pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/24 of 27 July 2011;
- (b) “Member” means an expert participating in a session of the Committee, who is head of delegation of a UN Member State;
- (c) “Session” means the annual meeting of the Committee or any additional meeting of the Committee, held under exceptional circumstances;
- (d) “Secretary-General” means the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

* E/C.20/2015/1

¹ These provisional ‘rules of procedure’ are those as amended and adopted by the Committee at its fourth session in August 2014.

II. Membership and composition

Rule 2

The Committee of Experts shall comprise experts from all Members States in the interrelated fields of surveying, geography, cartography and mapping, remote sensing, land/sea and geographic information systems and environmental protection designated by Governments of States Members.

Rule 3

Each Member State participating in a session of the Committee shall be represented by a head of delegation and such other accredited representatives, alternate representatives, experts and advisers as may be required. The head of delegation who represents the Member State shall be the full member of the Committee, with voting rights; the other accredited representatives, alternate representatives, experts and advisers may participate, without the right to vote, in the discussions at meetings of the Committee.

Rule 4

The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives, experts and advisers shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary of the Session if possible not later than 24 hours after the opening of the Session. The credentials shall be issued by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Rule 5

The three co-Chairs shall examine the credentials and report to the Session without delay.

Rule 6

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

III. Officers

Rule 7

The Committee shall elect three co-Chairs and a Rapporteur during each session from among its members with due regard for the equitable geographical rotation of these Officers from amongst the regions. The co-Chairs and the Rapporteur shall constitute the Bureau of the Committee. The Bureau shall take on tasks as designated by the Committee.

Rule 8

The three co-Chairs shall, as agreed among them, preside over the plenary meetings of the Session. Each co-Chair, when acting as President, shall not vote, but may designate another member of their delegation to vote in their place.

Rule 9

If one co-Chair is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, one or both of the two other co-Chairs shall, as agreed among them, preside. The three co-Chairs shall each act as President and shall have the same powers and duties.

III. Secretariat**Rule 10**

The Executive Secretary of the Session appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Session. He may appoint a deputy to take his place at any meeting.

Rule 11

The Executive Secretary or his representative may at any meeting make either oral or written statements concerning any questions under consideration by the Committee.

Rule 12

The Executive Secretary shall provide and direct such staff as is required by the Session. He shall be responsible for making all necessary arrangements for meetings and generally shall perform all other work which the Session may require.

IV. Conduct of business**Rule 13**

Representatives of a majority of the Member States participating in the Session shall constitute a quorum.

Rule 14

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 Session, direct the discussion at such meetings, ensure observance of these rules, 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, shall have complete control over the proceedings and over the maintenance of order thereat.

Rule 15

The President may, in the course of the discussions, propose to the Session the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. He may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting or the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. He may also call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the matter under discussion.

Rule 16

The President, in the exercise of his functions, remains under the authority of the Session.

Rule 17

During the discussion on any matter, a representative may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be immediately decided by the President in accordance with these 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 members present and voting. A representative raising a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 18

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

Rule 19

During the course of the debate, the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Session, declare the list closed. The President may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if, in his opinion, a speech delivered after he has declared the list closed makes this desirable. When the debate on an item is concluded because there are no other speakers, the President shall declare the debate closed. Such closure shall have the same effect as closure by decision of the Session pursuant to rule 20.

Rule 20

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

Rule 21

1. No one may address the Session without having previously obtained the permission of the President. Subject to rules 17 to 20, the President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak.

2. Debate shall be confined to the questions before the Session, and the President may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

3. The Session may limit the time allowed to speakers and the number of times the representative of each Member State may speak on a question; permission to speak on a motion to set such limits shall be accorded only to two representatives in favour of, and two opposing, such limits, after which the motion shall be put to the vote immediately. In any event, the President shall limit interventions on procedural questions to a maximum of five minutes. When the debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the President shall call the speaker to order without delay.

Rule 22

Proposals and amendments shall normally be introduced in writing and submitted to the Executive Secretary of the Session, 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 Session unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting. The President may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of amendments or motions as to procedure even though these amendments or motions have not been circulated or have only been circulated the same day.

Rule 23

A proposal, amendment or motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that it has not been amended. A proposal or a motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any representative.

Rule 24

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

V. Voting

Rule 25

Each Member State participating in the Session shall have one vote, and the decisions of the Session shall be made by a majority of the representatives present and voting.

Rule 26

For the purpose of these rules, the phrase “representatives present and voting” means representatives casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives who abstain from voting shall be considered not voting.

Rule 27

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

Rule 28

After the President has announced the commencement of voting, no representative shall interrupt the vote except on a point of order in connection with the actual process of voting. Explanations of their votes by representatives may, however, be permitted by the President either before or after the voting. The President may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations. The President shall not permit the proposer of a proposal or of an amendment to explain his vote on his own proposal or amendment.

Rule 29

Parts of a proposal shall be voted on separately if a representative requests that the proposal be divided. Those parts of the proposal which have been approved shall then be put to the vote as a whole; if all the operative parts of a proposal have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered rejected as a whole.

Rule 30

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 Session shall first vote on the amendment farthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next farthest 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 on. A proposal is considered an amendment to another proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

Rule 31

If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the Session shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they were submitted. The Session may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

Rule 32

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

Rule 33

1. When one or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions each member may cast a vote for as many candidates as there are places to be filled, and those candidates, in a number not exceeding the number of such places, obtaining in the first ballot a majority of the votes cast and the largest number of votes shall be elected.

2. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of persons or Members to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being 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 Member. 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, and the following three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted, and so on until all the places have been filled.

Rule 34

If a vote is equally divided on matters other than elections, a second vote shall be taken after an adjournment of the meeting for 15 minutes. If this vote is also equally divided, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

VI. Official and working languages**Rule 35**

Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the official languages of the Session, and English and French the working languages of the Session.

Rule 36

Speeches made in one of the official languages of the Session shall be interpreted into the other such languages. A representative may speak in a language other than a language of the Session if the delegation concerned provides for interpretation into one such language.

VII. Sound recordings**Rule 37**

The plenary meetings of the Session shall have sound recordings and such recordings shall be kept by the Secretariat in English only.

VIII. Public and private meetings**Rule 38**

The plenary meetings of the Session shall be held in public unless the body concerned decides that exceptional circumstances require that a particular meeting be held in private.

IX. Observers

Rule 39

Representatives of associate members of the Economic and Social Commission that are not independent States may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Committee and its sessions.

Rule 40

1. Representatives of the specialized agencies invited to the Session may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Session, on the invitation of the President of the Session, as the case may be, on questions within the scope of their activities.

2. Written statements of such specialized agencies shall be distributed by the Secretariat to the delegations at the Session in the languages and in the quantities that such statements are made available to the Secretariat.

Rule 41

1. Non-Member States, Entities, inter-governmental organizations and other entities that have received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and other inter-governmental organizations designated on a continuing basis by ECOSOC or invited by the Committee, shall have the right to participate in the Session as observers, without the right to vote.

2. Written statements by Non-Member States, Entities, inter-governmental organizations and other entities shall be distributed by the Secretariat in the languages and in the quantities that such statements are made available to the Secretariat.

Rule 42

Non-governmental organizations granted consultative status with ECOSOC as well as those non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the Session may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Session and may participate in the activities of the Session when so invited by the Committee.

XI. Amendments

Rule 43

These rules of procedure may be amended by a decision of the Session.
