

LN. IX. 3/11. (1)

[Distributed to the Council,  
the Members of the League  
and the States invited to the  
Conference.]

Official No.: **C.1002.M.558**, 1931. IX.  
[Conf.D.44.]

Geneva, December 21st, 1931.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

**CONFERENCE FOR THE REDUCTION AND LIMITATION  
OF ARMAMENTS**

**DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE.**

*Note by the Secretary-General:*

After consultation with the President of the Conference, the Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the Governments invited to the Conference the accompanying draft rules of procedure.

DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE.  
*(For adoption by the Conference.)*

**Organs of the Conference.**

I. DELEGATIONS.

1. The Conference shall consist of the delegations appointed by the Governments invited to the Conference.
2. Each delegation shall consist of one or more delegates who may be accompanied by substitute delegates, advisers, experts and secretaries.

II. THE PRESIDENT.

1. The President shall announce the opening, suspension and adjournment of the meetings; he shall submit to the Conference all communications whose importance appears to him to warrant that course; he shall ensure the observance of the rules of procedure, accord the right to address the Conference, declare the debates to be closed, put questions to the vote and announce the result of the voting.
2. The Conference shall elect its Vice-Presidents, who shall act for the President if occasion arises.

III. GENERAL COMMITTEE.

1. The General Committee of the Conference shall consist of the President, the Vice-Presidents and the Chairmen of the Conference Commissions.
2. The General Committee shall assist the President in the general direction of the work of the Conference, in the constitution of such commissions as the Conference decides to set up, in deciding on the communications to be made to the Conference, in the framing of the agenda for each plenary meeting, and in the determination of the order of priority for its various items.

IV. COMMITTEE FOR THE EXAMINATION OF DELEGATES' CREDENTIALS.

1. A committee of five members nominated by the President and appointed by the Conference shall be set up to examine the delegates' credentials and shall report to the Conference without delay.

2. Any plenipotentiaries whose admission cannot be decided upon forthwith shall sit provisionally with the same rights as other plenipotentiaries, unless the Conference decides otherwise.

#### V. COMMISSIONS.

1. The Conference shall have the right, according to the exigencies of the business on hand and convenience of work, to set up commissions on which all delegations may be represented, as well as committees consisting of a limited number of delegates.

2. The constitution of the following commissions is hereby decided upon:

Land Commission,  
Naval Commission,  
Air Commission,  
Commission on National Defence Expenditure,  
Conference Commission.

3. Each commission shall appoint its Chairman and its Vice-Chairman or its Vice-Chairmen and shall, at the appropriate time, appoint one or more Rapporteurs.

4. The commissions may themselves set up sub-commissions.

#### VI. SECRETARIAT.

The Secretary-General of the League of Nations shall be responsible for the secretarial work of the Conference and of its commissions, sub-commissions and committees as well as of the General Committee of the Conference.

#### Procedure.

#### VII. PUBLICITY.

The meetings of the Conference and of its commissions shall be held in public unless otherwise decided. Sub-commissions and committees will as a rule sit in private.

#### VIII. RIGHT TO ADDRESS THE CONFERENCE.

1. No member may address the Conference without the permission of the President. As a general rule, speakers shall be called upon in the order in which they have signified their desire to speak.

2. The Chairmen and Rapporteurs of commissions shall be accorded precedence for the purpose of defending or explaining the conclusions arrived at by their commissions.

3. The Conference may limit the time allowed to each speaker.

4. The President may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion. If necessary, he may direct the speaker to resume his seat.

5. If, when a question is under discussion, a member rises to a point of order, such point of order shall be immediately decided by the President.

#### IX. LANGUAGES.

1. Speeches in French shall be summarised in English, and vice versa, by an interpreter belonging to the Secretariat.

2. A representative speaking in another language shall provide for the translation of his speech into one of these two languages.

3. All documents, resolutions and reports circulated by the President or the Secretariat shall be drawn up in both French and English.

4. Any representative may have documents circulated in a language other than French or English, but the Secretariat will not be responsible for their translation or printing.

#### X. PREVIOUS QUESTION: CLOSURE.

1. During the discussion of any question, any delegation may move the previous question or the adjournment. Any such question shall have priority in the debate. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two speakers may address the Conference, one in favour of and one against the motion.

2. A delegation may at any time move the closure of the debate, whether any other representative has signified his wish to speak or not. If application is made for permission to speak against the closure, not more than two speakers may be called upon, one to speak in favour and one to speak against. The Conference shall decide on the closure by a majority of votes.

#### XI. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS.

1. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote unless copies of it have been circulated to all representatives not later than the day preceding the meeting.

2. The President may, however, authorise a departure from this rule. If any objection is raised, he shall take the opinion of the Conference, which shall decide by a majority of votes.

#### XII. VOTING.

1. The Conference shall vote by heads of delegations rising in their seats, and commissions shall vote by delegates raising their hands, except in cases where it is decided that a vote shall be taken by nominal roll-call.

2. Delegations which declare that they abstain shall be regarded as not present.

3. When a number of proposals are before the Conference, the proposal furthest removed in substance from the principal one—that is to say, from the one on which the discussion was opened—shall be voted on first.

4. Parts of a proposal shall be voted on separately if a delegation requests that the proposal be divided. In such a case, a vote must be taken on the whole text after its various parts have been voted upon separately.

5. If an amendment striking out part of a proposal is moved, the Conference shall first vote on whether the words in question shall stand as part of the proposal. If the decision is in the negative, the amendment shall then be put to the vote. When an amendment adds to a proposal, it should be voted on first and, if it is adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on.

#### XIII. ELECTIONS.

1. Elections shall be carried out by secret ballot. In exceptional cases, elections may take place by acclamation, if no delegation objects.

2. If, when only one person is to be elected, no one obtains at the ballot an absolute majority of votes, a new ballot shall be taken; but on this occasion the voting shall be confined to the two candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes at the first ballot. If there is, at this ballot, an equality of votes for the two candidates, the elder candidate shall be declared elected.

3. When a number of elective places of the same nature are to be filled at the same time, those persons who obtain an absolute majority at the first ballot shall be elected. If the number of persons obtaining such majority is less than the number of persons to be elected, there shall be a second ballot to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the unsuccessful candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes at the first ballot, but not more than double in number the places remaining to be filled. Those candidates, to the number required to be elected, who receive the greatest number of votes at the second ballot shall be declared elected.

#### XIV. ENFORCEMENT OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE.

The Conference's rules of procedure shall also apply, with suitable modifications, to the commissions, sub-commissions and committees.

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