



UNECE

Draft Operating procedures for meetings with remote participation and decision-making

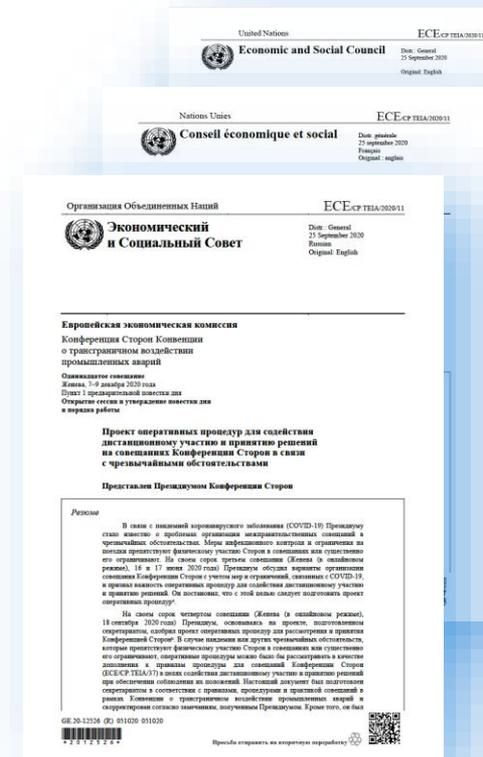
Advance information session

11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Geneva (online), 30 October 2020

Presentation overview

1. Introduction
2. Purpose of operating procedures
3. Developing the draft operating procedures
 - Document ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/11
 - <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=53220>
 - Available in ENG, FR, RUS
4. Key operating procedures in the draft
 - a. *Registration and credentials*
 - b. *Determining quorum*
 - c. *Advance circulation procedure*
 - d. *Informal side meetings*
 - e. *Voting procedures*
5. Concluding remarks



1. Introduction

- COVID-19 presents new challenges for organizing inter-governmental meetings
- Infection control measures and travel restrictions prevent or limit Parties from participating in-person
- The RoP do not prevent Parties from taking their decisions in meetings with a hybrid or virtual format
- “The Bureau, with secretariat assistance, shall prepare the CoP meetings in an effective and transparent manner” and “collectively reach out to and consult with all Parties” (ToR, para 3(g))
- At its 43rd meeting (16-17 June 2020), the Bureau requested the secretariat to prepare draft operating procedures to set out the procedures for facilitating meetings with remote participation and decision-making due to extraordinary circumstances
- At its 44th meeting (18 September 2020), the Bureau endorsed the draft operating procedures and recommended Parties adopt them and use them at CoP-11

2. Purpose of operating procedures

- Facilitate remote participation and decision-making
- Apply to meetings requiring remote participation due to extraordinary circumstances, such as COVID-19
 - *The secretariat will circulate logistical information to participants in advance of meetings (e.g. dates, contact details, virtual platform information)*
- Supplement the RoP to facilitate remote participation; the RoP continue to apply in full and take precedence over any operating procedures
- Ensure Parties retain the same rights, privileges and protections
- Provide a basis for the CoP to take efforts to reach consensus on decisions, as per Rule 36, at meetings with remote participation

3. Developing operating procedures

Rules of the Convention

- Industrial Accidents Convention
- Rules of Procedure of the meeting of the CoP
- Terms of Reference of the Bureau

Consideration of special procedures of other UN bodies

- UNECE Executive Committee
- UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
- General Assembly
- Other: World Health Assembly, BRS secretariat

Discussions with colleagues

- UN Office of Legal Affairs
- UNECE MEA secretariats
- UNEP

4a. Key procedures: Section V

Registration

- All participants shall pre-register through a form sent by the secretariat
- If the meeting is hybrid, participants shall indicate whether they intend to participate remotely
- The email addresses registered will be the official email used by the secretariat for communications before and during meetings

Submission of credentials

- Permanent Missions to submit copies to the secretariat via e-mail at least 10 days in advance of meeting -> by 27 November 2020
- Permanent Missions to submit originals to the secretariat by post or hand before meeting (or as soon as possible if the extraordinary circumstances do not allow)

4b. Key procedures: Section VI

Determining quorum

- Rule 27(2): The CoP can make decisions only if more than half the Parties are present (i.e. at least 21 Parties must be represented)
- “Presence” can be met through participants’ in-person or remote participation through internet or telephone connection to the meeting’s virtual platform
- Quorum shall be checked at the opening of meetings and times of adopting decisions and other documents, elections and voting
- Representatives of Parties shall ensure their internet or phone connection to the virtual platform is secure and stable
- If quorum is not met due to the virtual platform, Chair or secretariat having connection failures, the Chair may decide to suspend meetings until enough connections are re-established to meet quorum

4c. Key procedures: Section VII

Decision-making: Advance circulation procedure

1. The secretariat will circulate documents for adoption to Parties in UNECE languages
2. Parties shall consider the documents and can make proposed revisions/comments at least 4 weeks before meetings
3. Proposed revisions/comments?
 - *No: consensus expected at meetings (move to Step 5)*
 - *Yes: the Chair may arrange informal discussions with Parties; secretariat to consolidate comments, update documents*
4. The secretariat will aim to circulate updated documents to Parties in UNECE languages at least 1 week before meetings
5. At meetings, Parties review and deliberate circulated documents; if no proposed revisions/comments, the documents are adopted by consensus

4d. Key procedures: Section VII

Decision-making: Informal side meetings (optional)

- If no consensus is reached following the advance circulation procedure, the Chairperson, in consultation with the Vice-Chairpersons and the secretariat, may invite Parties to participate in-person and/or remotely in informal side meetings
- The informal side meetings may be held on the margins of meetings with intention to reach consensus on proposed revisions or comments received

4e. Key procedures: Section VIII

Voting procedures

- In accordance with Rule 36, if consensus is not reached and all efforts are exhausted, voting can take place
- All voting, except elections:
 - Shall take place by a roll call (name of countries in ENG); Head of Delegations shall indicate “yes”, “no” or “abstention”; 2nd roll call for HoD that did not respond in the 1st
 - If a Party prefers not to public disclose its vote through roll call, they can request the vote by correspondence procedure
 - Failing to cast a vote through either procedure will result in “absence” from the voting process
- Elections: in absence of consensus, voting shall be carried out through a “secret ballot”

5. Concluding remarks

Key points

- The RoP do not prevent Parties from taking their decisions in meetings with a hybrid or virtual format
- Many inter-governmental bodies and national bodies have adopted procedures for taking decisions in hybrid and virtual meetings
- The draft operating procedures ensure that Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention can take their decisions and continue their business under the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19
- The Bureau at its last 44th meeting (18 Sep 2020) endorsed the draft operating procedures and recommended their adoption and use by CoP-11
- Secretariat circulated draft operating procedures to Parties for comments (if any) by 9 November 2020

Next steps

- Adoption at CoP-11



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Discussion & questions