

RULES OF VOTING PROCEDURE

RULE 45: Voting Rights

Each Member State shall have one vote.

RULE 46: Simple Majority

Decisions of the committee on questions other than those provided for in rule 45, including the determination of additional categories of questions to be decided by a two-thirds majority, shall be made by a majority of the Members present and voting.

Comment – If a vote is equally divided, the motion, resolution, or amendment fails.

RULE 47: Important Questions

Decisions of the committee on important questions shall be made by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting. These questions shall include: recommendations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security, the election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the election of the Members of the Economic and Social Council, the election of members of the Trusteeship Council, the admission of new Members of the United Nations, the suspension of the rights and privileges of membership, the expulsion of Members, questions relating to the operation of the Trusteeship System, and budgetary questions.

RULE 48: Meaning of the Expression “Members Present and Voting”

For the purpose of these rules, the phrase “Members present and voting” means Members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members which abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

Comment – Abstentions will not be called for in procedural votes.

RULE 49: Method of Voting

The committees of the United Nations shall normally vote by show of placards, but any representative may request a roll call. The Chair may, at his or her discretion, request a number of seconds equal to one-tenth of the committee. The roll call shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the Members, beginning with the Member whose name is drawn at lot by the Chair. The name of each Member shall be called in roll-call and one of its representatives shall reply “Yes”, “No”, “Abstention” or “Pass”. Those Members who pass during the first round shall be called again and must reply either “Yes” or “No”; Members who pass during the first round may not abstain.

Comment – While abstentions do not count as votes for purposes of determining majority, Members abstaining from a vote may request the right to explain their abstention, provided that they were not the sponsor of the resolution or amendment. Roll-call votes may not be taken on procedural motions.

Only the P5 or Permanent Five members of the Security Council have the right to veto. The veto does not apply to procedural votes, which is significant in that the Security Council's permanent membership can vote against a 'procedural' draft resolution, without necessarily

blocking its adoption by the Council. The veto is exercised when any permanent member casts a "negative" vote on a 'substantive' draft resolution. Abstention, or absence from the vote by a permanent member does not prevent a draft resolution from being adopted.

RULE 50: Decisions on Competence

Any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the committee to adopt a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before a vote is taken on the proposal in question.

Comment – The Secretary-General has approved the competence of each committee to discuss the topic areas included in the provisional agenda. This rule serves to prevent the exercise of power reserved exclusively for the Security Council by the General Assembly. In this vote, an affirmative vote indicates that the body is NOT competent to pass the proposal and vice versa.

RULE 51: Conduct during Voting

After the Chairperson has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. The Chairperson may permit Members to explain their votes after the vote is taken. The Chairperson may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations. The Chair shall not permit the sponsor of a proposal or of an amendment to explain his or her vote on his or her own proposal or amendment.

Comment – During a vote, representatives should maintain proper decorum; no caucusing should take place, no notes should be passed, and no representatives should enter or leave the room.

RULE 52: Division of Proposals, Friendly Amendments, and Amendments

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 only to two speakers in favor and two speakers against. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment which 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.

Comment – This action consists of three stages, one procedural and two substantive:

- (1) The vote on whether the resolution or amendment will be divided at all; this is a procedural vote;
- (2) The vote on each of the divided operative parts; these are substantive votes;
- (3) The final vote on all of the accepted parts as a whole; this is a substantive vote.

Preambulatory phrases may not be divided. A motion for division must delineate the placement of each operative clause. Only clauses that are specified within the resolution or amendment may be divided.

Friendly Amendments may be voted upon after debate on the topic area has been closed and immediately before the vote on the relevant resolution. Preambulatory phrases may not be amended. An amendment may be taken as friendly if all sponsors agree to it within the

resolution. All other amendments must be put to a vote. The Chairperson shall determine the order of voting on the amendments and when one amendment implies the rejection of another.

RULE 53: Voting on Amendments

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 committee shall first vote 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 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.

Comment – Amendments may be voted upon after debate on the topic area has been closed and immediately before the vote on the relevant resolution. Preambulatory phrases may not be amended. An amendment may be taken as friendly if all sponsors agree to it within the resolution. All other amendments must be put to a vote. The Chairperson shall determine the order of voting on the amendments and when one amendment implies the rejection of another.

RULE 54: Voting on Proposals

If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the committee shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted. The committee may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal. Multiple resolutions may be passed on the same topic, provided they are not contradictory in nature.

Comment - It requires a majority to change the order in which a committee considers resolutions.