

SofIMUN 2013

Rules of Procedure for the North- Atlantic Council



WRITTEN BY MR. **EMMANOUIL BATISTAKIS**, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF SOFIMUN 2013

Based upon the Rules of Procedure of **ThessISMUN** with the help of **ThessISMUN Association** and mr. **Dimiter Mandradjiev**.



SOFIMUN
Sofia International Model United Nations

Edition: VI/2013
Period: 3-10 August 2013
Location: Sofia, Bulgaria

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Foundation: www.foundation.sofimun.org
E-mail: info@sofimun.org

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General Provisions

1. The SOFIMUN Rules of Procedure (hereinafter the "Rules") are not subject to change and shall be considered adopted prior to the beginning of the conference.
2. In a case of conflict between a general rule of the Rules and the special rules of an organ, the latter shall prevail.
3. The Secretary-General may alter and change the rules on his own discretion by informing the delegates and the chairperson.
4. **Language-** English is the official working language of the conference. Usage of other languages is prohibited during the sessions. If any documents in a language different than English is presented in front of a committee it cannot be accepted unless an official SOFIMUN translation takes place.
5. **Credentials-** The SOFIMUN Secretariat has accepted the credentials of Delegates or Observers prior to the opening of the conference. Actions relating to the alteration of rights or credentials of any Staff Member, Delegate or Chairperson may exclusively be initiated by the Secretary-General.
6. **Delegates** - Each Member State to an organ shall be represented by one (1) Delegate. The Delegates shall have speaking and voting rights on all matters in the organ they belong to.
7. **Observers-** The Representative of an accredited SOFIMUN observer (Non-governmental Organization or International Organization or Country) shall have the same rights as a Delegate except that he/she may not vote on substantive matters and may not sign nor sponsor Draft Agendas, Communiqué and Amendments.

RULE 1- Chairpersons

- 1.1 **Chairpersons** -The Board of the North- Atlantic Council in SOFIMUN shall be composed by a President and a Vice-|President.
- 1.2 **Competence of the Chairpersons** - The competence of the Chairpersons may not be questioned by the delegates, at any time and for whatever reason.
- 1.3 **Authority of the President-** The President shall exercise ultimate authority over his/her Council, presiding in an equitable and objective manner. The President also reserves the right to propose a motion at any time, which will help the work and procedures of the Council move forward and should be takes seriously into account by the Council. In case of disruptive or dilatory behavior of any participants, the President reserves the right to take any appropriate action.
- 1.4 **Responsibilities of the President-** The President is responsible for all procedural matters pertaining to the Council, including, but not limited to, moderating debate, determining the applicability of the rules and if necessary, clarifying on the meaning of the existing rules without needing any approval of the Council.
- 1.5 **Authority of the Vice-President-** The Vice-President shall have authority over all Council support operations. The Vice-President shall have as primary responsibility to ensure, in co-operation with the Secretary General, that delegates are accurately representing the position of their countries with respect to substantive issues and topics. The Vice-President reserves the right to take appropriate actions to ensure the proper representation of country-policies by the delegates.



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1.6 Responsibilities of the Vice President- The Vice-President shall also be responsible for ensuring relevancy of the content and format of the Working Papers before their submission for verification by the SofiMUN Secretary General or the Deputy Secretary General. The Vice-President shall also assist the President with all Council presiding matters.

1.7 Caucus of the Board -The Chairpersons reserve the right to halt the procedures within the committee in order to take 30 seconds of internal Caucus.

RULE 2- Parliamentary procedure

2.1 Roll Call- Attendances shall be kept by the Chairpersons with a Roll Call at the beginning of every committee session. Delegates shall establish their presence in the committee by raising their placards and declaring *"Present"*.

2.2 Procedural Matters -Procedural matters are those matters relating to the structure of the committee session as defined in the SOFIMUN 2013 Rules of Procedure. All Delegates must vote on procedural matters, by raising their placards and no Delegate may abstain. Roll Call vote is not in order for procedural matters.

2.3 Substantive Matters- Substantive matters are defined as those matters relating to the specific topic at hand. Delegates that have established their presence at the initial Roll Call shall act accordingly.

RULE 3- Majority

Unless otherwise specified, no motions are debatable and all require a simple majority vote to pass.

3.1 Simple Majority- A procedural or substantive matter requiring a simple majority to pass implies that fifty percent plus one vote (50% + 1) of the committee must vote in favour of the matter to pass. If the vote is a tie, the matter will be considered to have failed.

3.2 Two-thirds (2/3) Majority- A procedural or substantive matter requiring a two-thirds (2/3) majority to pass implies that two-thirds (2/3) of the committee must vote in favour for a matter to pass. If there is at least one vote in favour or against and the remaining votes are abstentions subject is considered to have either passed or failed respectively.

3.3 Unanimity- Unanimity is needed in order to reach decision and adopt a Draft Communiqué. Each member state has one vote. Abstentions are permissible and do not count against unanimity, being interpreted as an absence of the abstaining state from voting procedure.

RULE 4- Quorum

Committee activities and debate shall start when at least one third (1/3) of the delegates (quorum) are present which will be verified through Roll Call that will be carried out by the Chairpersons, following rule. If quorum is not met thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled start time of the committee session, the committee shall start its session with the number of delegates already present, unless otherwise instructed by SOFIMUN 2013 Secretariat. Participants arriving during or after the roll call, are required to send a note to the Chair stating their presence in the committee. As long as participants have not informed the Chair of their arrival they will not be allowed to vote or give a speech. All participants who have not informed the Chair of their arrival until voting procedure begins are not eligible to vote. The total number of delegates will be determined by the attendance list from the most recent committee session. If quorum is in question in the first committee session, the list of delegations expected to attend will serve to determine the total number of delegates in attendance. Quorum will be assumed to be present unless specifically challenged and shown to be absent. The Chairs may at any time, and especially before entering voting procedures, revisit the quorum at their own discretion.



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RULE 5- Agenda

- 5.1 **Motion to set the Agenda** - Following the Motion in order to Verify the Quorum, a Motion to "Set the Agenda" on a specific topic will be in order. The Chairs will consider the Motions in the order in which they were made. It is in the discretion of the Chair to take one (1) speaker in favour and one (1) speaker against the Motion and proceed with a vote. The Speakers will receive the floor, in order to express their view, in rotation (in favour – against). If the Motion is accepted, requiring simple majority, the Agenda will be set in the manner suggested by the Motion. If the Motion fails, the Chairs shall consider the next Motion and repeat the process laid forward in the above sections. If no Motion to set the Agenda receives the necessary simple majority then the Committee will discuss as first topic the one that gathered the most positive votes during the voting procedure. The order in which the Agenda is set at the beginning of the conference shall remain for the duration of SOFIMUN. The Chairs shall call for tabling of the debate if committee updates and news need to be considered immediately by the delegates. The committee shall return to the regular Agenda once the given updates and news have been addressed.
- 5.2 Representatives may not delete items from the original Agenda, except in the case of splitting an agenda topic. No additional items may be added to the Agenda, except in the case of splitting an agenda topic.
- 5.3 **Alteration of the Agenda**- In the event of an international crisis or emergency, the Secretary General or his/her Deputies may call upon the Committee to table debate on the current topic area so that the more urgent matter may be attended to immediately. After a communiqué has been passed on the crisis topic, the Committee will return to debate the tabled topic. If a communiqué on the crisis topic fails, the Committee may return to debate on the tabled topic area only at the discretion of the Secretary General or his/her Under Secretary Generals.

RULE 6- Speeches

- 7.1 A Delegate may move to set a time limit on speeches after the Quorum has been set. The Chair may either rule the Motion dilatory at his/her discretion or put it to vote. If there are more than one Motions to Set the Speaking Time, they will be voted upon in order of the most disruptive first.
- 7.2 No Representative may address an organ without having previously obtained the permission of the Chairperson.
- 7.3 The Chairperson limits the time allotted to each speaker. A Representative may at any time when the floor is open, but not during speeches, introduce a Motion to Change the Speaking Time. This motion is non-debatable and passes at the discretion of the Chairperson. The decision of the Chairperson is not subject to appeal.
- 7.4 If a Representative addresses the organ without permission, exceeds the allowed time for his speech, makes irrelevant or offensive statements, or violates the SOFIMUN Rules in any other way, the Chairperson may call him/her to order.

RULE 7- Debate

- 8.1 **Formal Debate** - Unless the Chair decides otherwise, **moderated caucus** will be the form of debate during all sessions of the Council. Any delegate wishing to speak should raise his/her placard and be recognized by the President.
- 8.2 **Informal Debate** - During formal debate a motion can be put forth by any delegate for an Unmoderated Caucus. Informal debate can only occur on substantive issues and is out of order once a motion to close debate has been passed.

RULE 8- Points

- 10.1 **Point of Personal Privilege**- A Delegate may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege if a matter impairs him/her from participating fully in committee activities. The Chairpersons shall try to effectively address the source of



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impairment. A Point of Personal Privilege may only interrupt a speaker if the delegate speaking is inaudible. Otherwise, the delegate rising on the Point of Personal Privilege must wait till the end of the speech to raise the Point.

- 10.2 **Point of Order** - A Delegate may rise to a Point of Order if a Rule of Procedure is not properly observed by a Delegate or by the Chairpersons. The Chairs will rule on the validity of the point immediately. A Delegate rising to a Point of Order may not comment on the topic of the discussion. A Point of Order ruled dilatory by the Chairs may not be appealed. This point may not interrupt a Speaker.
- 10.3 **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry** - A Delegate may rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry requesting an explanation from the Chair on the Rules of Procedure. This point may not interrupt a Speaker.
- 10.4 **Right of Reply** - A Delegate whose personal or national integrity has been impugned by another Delegate's comments may rise to a Right of Reply. Disagreement with the content of a Delegate's speech is not grounds for a Right of Reply. The Chair will recognize the Right of Reply at his/her discretion as well as decide on how to resolve the motion. This point may not interrupt a speaker but should be addressed the moment he/she has finished his/her speech. Should the Chairs rule the Right of Reply out of order, his/her decision cannot be appealed. No delegate may call for a Right of Reply on a Right of Reply.

RULE 9- Motions

- 11.1 **Motion for the Adjournment of the Meeting** - A Delegate may move for the Adjournment of the meeting to suspend all committee activities until the next scheduled meeting time. The Chair may rule the Motion out of order without possibility of appeal or putting it to vote.
- 11.2 **Motion for the Adjournment of the Session** - A Delegate may move for the Adjournment of the Session to cease permanently all Council activities¹. The Chair may rule the Motion out of order without possibility of appeal or putting it to vote. In the event that the President approves this, there should be two (2) speakers for and two (2) speakers against and the motion will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority to pass.
- 11.3 **Motion for Un-moderated Caucus**
- 11.3.1 Un-moderated caucus interrupts a formal debate for a given time proposed by a delegate. It is used for informal debates and negotiations.
- 11.3.2 Representative may at any time when the floor is open, but not during speeches, introduce a Motion for Caucus. The Representative shall rise when called by the Chairperson to explain the purpose of the motion and propose a time for the Caucus. The Motion for Caucus requires the support of a second Representative, is non-debatable and shall immediately be put to vote. A majority of Representatives present is required for the Motion for Caucus to pass. The Chairperson may rule the Motion for Caucus out of order. The decision of the Chairperson is not subject to appeal.
- 11.4 **Motion for Extension of the Caucus** - A delegate can issue a Motion for Extension of the Caucus during the caucus in order to extend the time of the caucus, after the time of the previous has elapsed. The proposed extension cannot be the same or longer than the current caucus. The Chairperson may rule out the Motion for Extension of the Caucus. The decision of the Chairperson is not subject to appeal. A n unmoderated caucus can only be extended once.
- 11.5 **Motion to Table Debate on a Topic** - A Delegate may move to Table Debate in order to end debate on a substantive issue without voting any Draft Communiqués that may be on the floor. If the Chair rules the Motion in order, one (1) Delegate shall speak in favour and one (1) Delegate shall speak against before proceeding with a vote. If the Motion passes, the Chairs shall entertain a Motion to Return to a Dismissed Topic or a Motion to Open Debate on an Unsettled Topic on the Agenda.



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11.6 Motion to Return to a Dismissed Topic- If a Motion to Table the Debate is passed, the Chair may entertain a Motion to go back to a Dismissed Topic. In that event, the Chair will entertain one (1) Speaker in favour and one (1) Speaker against. A two-thirds majority (2/3) vote is required for the Motion to pass. If the Motion passes, debate on the dismissed topic resumes and a new debate is established.

11.7 Motion for Closure of the Debate

11.8.1 The closure of the debate immediately terminates all discussions on the item of the Agenda under debate and brings all Amendments and Draft Communiqués on the floor to vote.

11.8.2 A Representative may at any time when the floor is open, but not during speeches and caucuses, introduce a Motion for Closure of the debate. The Motion requires the support of a second Representative. The Chairperson may rule out the Motion for Closure of the Debate. The decision of the Chairperson is subject to appeal and can be ruled out by two thirds of Representatives present and voting. The Motion for Closure of the Debate is debatable. The debate on the Motion for Closure of the Debate shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

11.8.3 Two thirds of Representatives present are required for the Motion for Closure of the Debate to pass.

11.8 Motion to Split the Topic Area- A Delegate may move to split the Topic Area in order for the committee to come up with more than one communiqués referring to the same Topic. The delegate who moves will have to provide sufficient justification for the proposed splitting of the Topic Area. A 2/3 majority vote is required for this motion to pass.

11.9 Motion to Question Competence- A Motion to Question the Competence of the Body to consider a Draft Communiqué is in order upon introduction of the documents. The Chair will recognise one (1) Speaker in favour and one (1) Speaker against the Motion. There will be a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote required to pass. If the Motion is approved, the document will be retracted and will not be allowed to be re-introduced.

RULE 10- Working Paper

Working Paper- A Working Paper is an informal document used by committee Delegates to work on building a Draft Communiqué. A Working Paper will be distributed at the Chairs' discretion if requested by a Delegate. A Working Paper can be presented by during formal debate.

RULE 11- Draft Communiqués

13.1 The Chairperson approves a document if it has the required format and one (1) Sponsor. An approved document with protocol number given by the Secretariat is referred to as a Draft Communiqué and may be introduced to the committee.

13.2 Sponsor is recognized as the writer of the Draft Communiqué.

13.3 Sponsor can withdraw its name from the Draft Communiqué, before entering the voting procedure, then Draft Communiqué is automatically being withdrawn or another delegate can claim the sponsorship.

13.4 More than one Draft Communiqué may be on the floor at any time.

13.5 Withdrawal of Sponsorships- Sponsorship of a draft communiqué may be withdrawn at any time before voting on it has begun. Sponsorship of a communiqué may not be withdrawn after a vote has been taken on a contested amendment.



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13.6 Introducing Draft Communiqués- Delegates may move to introduce a Draft Communiqué once it has been approved and assigned a number by the President and distributed to the Council. Such an introduction shall be procedural in nature. The content of the introduction shall be limited to the reading of the draft Communiqué as a whole where upon the Sponsor of the Draft Communiqué shall be granted the floor for the allotted time limit. Following this motion, a new debate will begin upon the introduced Draft Ministerial Declaration, according to rules in Section 7.

13.7 Withdrawal of Draft Communiqués- A Draft Communiqué may be withdrawn by its Sponsor at any time before voting on it has commenced. This request should be submitted in written form to the Chairpersons with the signature of all the sponsors. A Draft Communiqué may not be withdrawn if an Amendment to it is on the floor and it has been introduced by the chairpersons. A draft communiqué may not be withdrawn if any unfriendly amendment to it is on the floor.

RULE 12- Amendments.

During Debate on a Draft Communiqué a Delegate may move to introduce an Amendment which will add to, strike out from or revise a part of the Draft Communiqué. The Amendment has to be first approved by the Chairs. Amendments in NAC can have only one (1) sponsor. It is in the discretion of the Chair to define (to the House) the period of time, during which the floor will be open to Amendments.

14.1 Amendments to Pre-Ambulatory Clauses - Amendments to Pre-Ambulatory Clauses are not in order. However, the Chair may rule such an Amendment in order if serious mistakes have been noticed in the Pre-Ambulatory Clauses by the Secretary General or the Deputy Secretary Generals.

14.2 Non-Substantive Amendments- Amendments correcting grammatical, spelling or formatting mistakes on Draft Communiqués will be automatically adopted without vote from the committee, at the discretion of the Chair. Following the initial reading of the Draft Communiqué by its sponsor, delegates are permitted to point out any such problems to the Chairpersons.

14.3 Friendly Amendments- Substantive Amendments approved by the Sponsor of a Draft Communiqué will automatically be integrated to the Draft Communiqué without the need to be put to a vote from the committee. Amendments to Friendly Amendments are out of order.

14.4 Unfriendly Amendments- Substantive Amendments to a Draft Communiqué not approved by the Sponsor of a Draft Communiqué are considered unfriendly and require approval from the Chairs to be introduced. Unfriendly Amendments will be put to a vote prior to the vote on the Draft Communiqué as a whole. Amendments to Unfriendly Amendments are in order. It is, however, in the discretion of the Chairs whether or not he/she will accept a plethora of such amendments. The Chairs reserve the right to assign one (1) speaker for and one (1) speaker against each Unfriendly Amendment.

14.5 Withdrawal Friendly Amendments- The Sponsor of a Friendly Amendment may request its withdrawal at his/her discretion, before its adoption by the Sponsor of the Draft Communiqué.

14.6 Withdrawal Unfriendly Amendments- The Sponsor of an Unfriendly Amendment may request its withdrawal at his/her discretion, before its adoption by the committee.

RULE 13- Voting Procedure

When the Chair announces that the committee is entering voting procedure, no entering or exiting from the room will be permitted, unless there is an emergency or until voting procedure has come to an end. At this time, Motions to Split the House, Divide the Question or for Roll Call Voting are in order. Note passing is also suspended.

RULE 14- Order of Voting



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If two or more draft communiqués relate to the same question, they should be voted on in the order in which they were submitted.

Reordering Draft Communiqués- A Motion to Reorder Draft Communiqués will be in order immediately after entering voting procedure, and before voting has started on any draft communiqués. The delegate moving to Reorder Draft Communiqués will have to state the order through which he/she desires the Draft Communiqués to be voted on. This motion requires simple majority to pass.

RULE 15- Method of Voting

Each Delegate of the committee has one vote and must demonstrate his/her voting intentions by raising his/her placard at the Chairs' request unless there is a Roll Call vote. Delegates must vote "in favour" or "against" on procedural matters and "in favour", "against" or "abstain" on substantive matters. No Delegate shall vote on behalf of another Delegate.

- 17.1 Roll Call Vote-** Roll Call Motions are in order only for substantive matters. This Motion is automatically accepted unless the Chair rules it out of order; the decision is not subject to appeal. The Roll Call starts from a Delegate, randomly selected by the Chair.
- 17.2 Passing-** During Roll Call, a Delegate may choose to pass. The Chair will place the Delegate at the bottom of the voting list. A Delegate who has passed once during a voting sequence may not pass again or abstain, but must ascertain his vote. A delegate who has passed cannot vote "with Rights".
- 17.3 Voting with Rights-** A Delegate may request a right of explanation after voting. Upon completion of voting, the Delegate will be permitted to explain the reasons as to why he/she has chosen to vote in a certain way. The Chair may limit the speaking time at his/her discretion.
- 17.4 Voting on Draft Communiqués-** Draft Communiqués will be voted on, in the order that they were numbered by the Secretary General and the Under Secretary Generals, unless a motion to Reorder Draft Communiqués has passed.
- 17.5 Voting on Amendments-** All Unfriendly Amendments shall be voted upon in the order in which they were proposed before the committee closes debate on the Draft Communiqué that they concern. If one Amendment implies the rejection of a second Amendment, the second Amendment will not be voted upon. A passed Amendment shall be automatically integrated into the Draft Communiqué. Once all the Amendments relating to a Draft Communiqué have been voted upon, the committee shall vote upon the Draft Communiqué as a whole after Closure of the Debate on the Topic Area under discussion.
- 17.6 Motion to Split the House-** The Motion to Split the House is in order when the Delegate putting the motion forward wishes that there be no abstentions during the final vote on the Communiqué. This Motion has to be put forth immediately after the committee Closes Debate and enters into Voting Procedure. The Motion shall be put to a vote, requiring a 2/3 majority to pass. Once the Motion passes, delegations shall not be allowed to abstain from voting during the vote on the communiqué.
- 17.7 Motion to Divide the Question-** Prior to the start of the voting process on a Draft Communiqué, a Delegate may request through a Motion to Divide the Question to vote on an individual or group of operative clauses or clause by clause. A Delegate must specify how he/she wishes to divide the operative clauses during his/her Motion. Should there be more than one Motion to divide the question on the floor, the committee shall vote on the Motions from the most to the least splitting of the draft communiqué. The Chair shall take one (1) Speaker in favour and one (1) Speaker against the first Motion to Divide the Question for a speaking time of one (1) minute each. Simple majority is required to pass the Motion. If the Motion passes, subsequent Motions to Divide the Question will be ruled dilatory and the committee will proceed to voting procedure on the Draft Communiqué in the manner suggested in the Motion. If the Motion fails, the remaining Motions will be considered in accordance with the above procedure. The divided section that fails during voting will be taken out of the final Draft Communiqué; only those sections that have been passed will remain. The committee will then proceed to vote on the new final Draft Communiqué as a whole after all the divisions have been voted upon. If all operative clauses fail, the Draft Communiqué, as a whole, fails.



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17.8 Motion to Retake Vote-The Motion to Retake vote is in order when the result of the vote on the communiqué ends with a difference of one (1) between the number of votes for and against the communiqué. The Motion is not subject to a vote and must only be seconded in order to pass. Once the Motion passes the committee shall go to a period of five (5) minimum, fifteen (15) maximum minutes of unmoderated caucus, defined by the Chairpersons, for the purpose of further discussing the content of the Communiqué. After the caucus the vote shall be retaken and the result of the second vote shall be considered as final. No Motions to retake vote shall be entertained. Should the second vote end in absolute tie the results of the previous vote shall be considered final and shall not be subject to another motion to retake vote.

RULE 16- Seconds & Objections

After a delegate makes a motion, right before moving to vote on that motion, the board will ask for seconds, ie for delegates agreeing with the motion made by the first delegate. All the delegates wishing to second the motion will have to raise their placards. If there are no seconds the motion will automatically fail.

If there are seconds, the board will ask for objections, ie for delegates disagreeing with the motion made by the first delegate. All the delegates wishing to object to the motion will have to raise their placards. If there are no objections, the motion will automatically pass. If there are objections, the board will proceed with a voting procedure.

Precedence Motions shall be considered in the following decreasing order.

Rule	Description	Debatable	Votes Required	Interrupt Speaker
Point of Personal Privilege	Feeling discomfort	No	No	Yes
Point of Order	To point out a misuse of rules	No	No	No
Right of Reply	Reply to an insult	No	No	No
Point of Parliamentary Inquiry	Clarify the rules	No	No	No
Motion to Set the Agenda	Set the Working Agenda	Yes (1+/1-)	Simple Majority	No
Motion to adjourn session	Adjourn session to cease permanently all committee activities	Yes (2+/2-)	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Adjourn Meeting	Adjourn until next scheduled meeting	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion for Unmoderated Caucus	Proceed to an Unmoderated Caucus	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Split the House	Forbid the right for abstentions	No	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Retake Vote	Retake vote if there is an one vote difference	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion for the Verification of Quorum	Seeking to verify the presence of delegates	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Close Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion	Close debate on the Topic Area	Yes (1-)	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Split the Topic Area	Discuss separately two or more sections of the same Topic	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Table Debate	Postpone debate	Yes (1+/1-)	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Question Competence	Question the authority of the committee on a topic	Yes (1+/1-)	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Divide the Question	Divide the operative clauses to groups and vote each group separately	Yes (1+/1-)	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Introduce a Draft	Introduction of a Draft	No	Simple Majority	No



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Communiqué	Communiqué			
Motion to Introduce an Amendment	Introduction of an Amendment	No	Simple Majority	No

Diagram: The birth of a communiqué

