

**RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS  
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT**

*(adopted by the Twenty-fifth International Conference  
of the Red Cross at Geneva in October 1986)*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SECTION I

### **General Provisions**

- Rule 1 General object of these Rules
- Rule 2 Other rules
- Rule 3 Conflicting provisions

## SECTION II

### **The International Conference**

- Rule 4 Place and date
- Rule 5 Convocation
- Rule 6 Provisional agenda
- Rule 7 Submission and despatch of official documents
- Rule 8 Submission and distribution of National Society reports on their work
- Rule 9 Participants
- Rule 10 Guests
- Rule 11 Information media
- Rule 12 Languages
- Rule 13 Alphabetical order
- Rule 14 Quorum
- Rule 15 Chairmanship
- Rule 16 Bureau and commissions
- Rule 17 Notification of proposals
- Rule 18 Debates
- Rule 19 Adoption of resolutions
- Rule 20 Voting procedure
- Rule 21 Election of members of the Standing Commission
- Rule 22 Proceedings of the Conference

## SECTION III

### **The Council of Delegates**

- Rule 23 Place and date
- Rule 24 Convocation
- Rule 25 Provisional agenda
- Rule 26 Opening meeting
- Rule 27 Work of the Council
- Rule 28 Proceedings of the Council

## SECTION IV

### **The Standing Commission**

- Rule 29 Convocation
- Rule 30 Quorum
- Rule 31 Proceedings of the Standing Commission

## SECTION V

### **Final Provisions**

- Rule 32 Amendments to the Statutes and to these Rules
- Rule 33 Entry into force of these Rules

# Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

## SECTION I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Rule 1

#### General object of these Rules

The general object of these Rules of Procedure (hereinafter called “these Rules”) is to ensure the implementation of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (hereinafter called “the Statutes”) and to regulate the work of its statutory bodies.

### Rule 2

#### Other rules

1. The statutory bodies of the Movement may enact other rules of procedure as provided in the Statutes.

*Statutory  
bodies*

2. Any subsidiary body established by the statutory bodies, other than the plenary commissions of the International Conference, may draw up by consensus its own rules of procedure. In the absence of any such rules and to the plenary commissions of the International Conference, these Rules shall be applied *mutatis mutandis*.

*Subsidiary  
bodies*

### Rule 3

#### Conflicting provisions

The Statutes shall prevail over any other provisions and these Rules over any other rules or regulations drawn up by the statutory bodies or by any subsidiary bodies established by them.

## SECTION II: THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### Rule 4

#### Place and date

*Decision* 1. The place and date of the International Conference (hereinafter called "the Conference") shall be fixed by the Standing Commission if the previous Conference has not already decided on this matter.

*Assurance from government* 2. A decision on the place of the next Conference shall only be taken after the Conference or the Standing Commission has received an assurance in writing from the government of the country in which the next Conference is proposed to be held that all participants as defined in Rule 9 will be allowed to take part.

*Change of date* 3. Any change of the date of the Conference according to Article 11, paragraph 2 of the Statutes shall be notified by the Standing Commission to the host of the Conference as soon as possible but at the latest in time to enable the host organization to despatch the notice of convocation ninety days before the revised opening date of the Conference.

### Rule 5

#### Convocation

A National Society, the International Committee or the League, when mandated to act as host to the Conference, shall despatch to the members and observers of the Conference the notice of convocation by registered airmail at least six months before the date fixed for the opening of the Conference. The notice of convocation shall indicate the place, opening date and the anticipated duration of the Conference.

### Rule 6

#### Provisional agenda

*Despatch* 1. The programme and the provisional agenda of the Conference drawn up by the Standing Commission shall accompany the notice of convocation. The provisional agenda is subject to approval by the Council.

2. Observations, amendments or additions to the provisional agenda must be received by the Standing Commission at least sixty days before the opening of the Conference, unless the Standing Commission agrees to a later date.

*Amendments*

**Rule 7**  
**Submission and despatch of official documents**

Any document submitted by a member of the Conference for inclusion as an official working document and for classification as such must be received by the Standing Commission at the latest ninety days before the opening of the Conference. The documents shall be despatched, with the approval of the Standing Commission, by the International Committee and the League to the members and observers of the Conference at least forty-five days before the opening of the Conference.

**Rule 8**  
**Submission and distribution of National Society reports on their work**

Reports submitted to the Conference by National Societies on their work since the previous Conference should be sent direct to the host organization, so as to arrive at least thirty days before the opening of the Conference, for distribution, subject to the approval of the Bureau of the Conference.

**Rule 9**  
**Participants**

1. Participants in the Conference shall be the delegates of the members defined in Article 9 of the Statutes and the observers in terms of Article 11, paragraph 5 of the Statutes.

*Definition*

*Delegates*

2. The name of the delegates of each delegation, one of them designated as head of delegation, shall be communicated by the members to the host organization before the first meeting of the Council. During the Conference the Chairman shall be informed of any addition, change or deletion regarding the composition of delegations. No delegate shall be nominated for any official position unless his name has reached the host organization within the prescribed time.

*Observers*

3. Observers at the Conference are either invited persons or representatives of invited organizations; organizations shall communicate the names of their representatives to the host organization before the opening of the Conference. Observers have the right to speak only on the invitation of the Chairman and to the extent that the Conference has no objections; they shall have access to the documents of the Conference.

**Rule 10**  
**Guests**

The host organization may issue invitations to guests to the opening and closing ceremonies and to such other occasions as the Standing Commission or the Bureau of the Conference may decide.

**Rule 11**  
**Information media**

The Bureau of the Conference shall be responsible for all matters relating to official information on the Conference. It shall arrange for appropriate coverage of the Conference proceedings by the information media, unless the Conference decides otherwise.

**Rule 12**  
**Languages**

*Official languages*

1. The official languages of the Conference shall be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The official languages may be used in debates without the prior permission of the Chairman. Any delegate wishing to speak in a language other than an official language shall first obtain the permission of the Chairman.

2. The working languages of the Conference shall be English, French and Spanish. The working languages are those in which simultaneous interpretation is provided and are the only languages in which documents relating to items on the agenda will be prepared. Any delegate using a language which is not a working language shall provide for its interpretation into one of the working languages.

*Working  
languages*

3. The Standing Commission, in agreement with the host organization, may decide that for a particular Conference the language of the host country will also be authorized for simultaneous interpretation.

*Language  
of the  
host  
country*

### **Rule 13** **Alphabetical order**

The alphabetical order of the members of the Conference shall be the alphabetical order of the French names of their respective countries. The name of the National Society and of the State which vote first shall be decided by the drawing of lots.

### **Rule 14** **Quorum**

To be valid, the deliberations of the Conference shall require a quorum of one third of the total of the components of the Movement as defined in Article 1 of the Statutes and of the States as defined in Article 2 of the Statutes.

### **Rule 15** **Chairmanship**

1. The opening ceremony of the Conference shall be chaired by a representative of the host organization.

*Opening  
ceremony*

2. The first plenary meeting of the Conference shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Standing Commission until the Chairman of the Conference has been elected.

*First  
plenary  
meeting*

3. At its first plenary meeting the Conference shall elect the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Secretary General and two Assistant Secretaries General on the proposal of the Council.

*Elections*

*Powers  
of the  
Chairman*

4. In addition to the powers conferred upon him elsewhere in these Rules and subject to paragraphs 1 and 2, the Chairman shall declare the opening and closing of each plenary meeting of the Conference, ensure observance of these Rules, conduct all debates, put questions to the vote and announce the results. He may charge one of the Vice-Chairmen to replace him during any meeting or part of a meeting.

*Powers  
of the  
Vice-  
Chairman*

5. Any Vice-Chairman charged by the Chairman to represent him shall have the powers and duties of the Chairman.

### **Rule 16** **Bureau and commissions**

*Bureau*

1. There shall be a Bureau which shall organize the work of the Conference. The Bureau shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Conference and its membership shall include the Chairman of the Standing Commission, the heads of the delegations from the International Committee and from the League, the Chairmen of the plenary commissions and the Secretary General of the Conference.

*Plenary  
commissions*

2. Plenary commissions are subsidiary bodies open to all participants in the Conference. The Conference may establish such commissions for the duration of the Conference as proposed by the Standing Commission. The Conference shall adopt the agenda of the commissions so established. Each commission shall elect its Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteurs on the proposal of the Council.

*Other  
subsidiary  
bodies*

3. The Conference may at any time establish other subsidiary bodies, including their agendas, for the duration of the Conference.

### **Rule 17** **Notification of proposals**

*Additions  
to the  
agenda*

1. The Bureau may propose to the Conference that new items be added to the agenda, provided that the proposals are submitted to the Chairman the day before and signed by at least five delegations to the Conference each belonging to a different country. The Bureau shall determine the agenda for each meeting, following as far as possible the order of the subjects proposed by the Standing Commission and approved by the Council.



2. Subject to the provisions of Article 11, paragraph 4 of the Statutes, proposals and amendments other than points of order shall be communicated in writing in advance to the Chairman and circulated by him to the delegates before being discussed, unless he decides otherwise. A similar procedure shall apply to other documents.

*Proposals  
and  
amendments*

3. The Chairman may decide that any proposal, or amendment, including motions of closure, shall be seconded by another delegation before it can be discussed or voted upon.

*Seconding*

### **Rule 18 Debates**

1. No delegate may take the floor without first having obtained permission from the Chairman. Speakers shall be called upon in the order in which they have signified to the Chairman their desire to speak. Priority shall be given to the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Commission concerned or to the delegate responsible for the respective report, proposal or amendment under discussion.

*Debating  
procedure*

2. The duration of speeches shall be limited to ten minutes but may be extended or shortened at the Chairman's discretion, unless the Conference decides otherwise.

*Duration  
of speeches*

3. If during a discussion, a delegate raises a point of order, the discussion shall be suspended and the point of order decided immediately by the Chairman according to these Rules or, at the Chairman's discretion, by the Conference. A delegate raising a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

*Points  
of order*

4. The following motions shall have precedence in the order set out below over all other proposals or motions:

*Priority  
of motions*

- a) to suspend the meeting;
- b) to adjourn the meeting;
- c) to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;
- d) to close the debate on the item under discussion.

Such motions must be seconded by at least four other delegations.

*Motions*

5. Unless the Chairman decides otherwise, only one delegate may speak for and one against points of order and the motions mentioned in paragraph 4.

*Closure  
of debates*

6. Discussion upon each question shall be closed when there is no further speaker or when a motion of closure has been adopted by the Conference. During the course of a debate, the Chairman may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Conference, declare the list closed. He may accord the right of reply to any member concerned by a previous intervention.

*Appeal  
against  
ruling of  
Chairman*

7. A delegation may appeal against the ruling of the Chairman. The appeal shall immediately be put to the vote, and the Chairman's ruling shall stand unless over-ruled by a majority of the members of the Conference present and voting.

## **Rule 19** **Adoption of resolutions**

*By  
consensus*

1. Consensus shall be understood to mean the absence of any objection expressed by a delegation and submitted by it as constituting an obstacle to the adoption of the resolution in question. After the adoption by consensus of a resolution, any delegation may state the standpoint it would have adopted had the matter been put to vote.

*By voting*

2. If no consensus is reached, resolutions shall be taken by a majority of those members present and voting.

## **Rule 20** **Voting procedure**

*Voting  
order*

1. Amendments to a proposal or motion shall be put to the vote before the proposal or motion. In the event of there being several amendments, the Chairman shall first put to the vote the amendment furthest removed from the original proposal.

*Right  
to vote*

2. The vote of each delegation shall be expressed by its head or by the delegate he has designated to replace him. The Chairman shall have no vote apart from that allocated to his delegation.

3. The majority shall be half the total number of votes cast for or against the proposal, plus one. The number of those members present and voting who express a vote of abstention shall be recorded but not taken into account in determining the majority. In the event of a tie, the proposal shall be rejected. The result of the votes shall be announced by the Chairman and included in the proceedings of the Conference.

*Majority*

4. In the absence of a consensus, the vote shall, as a general rule, be taken by a show of hands.

*Show of hands*

5. The vote shall be taken by roll call if ten delegations so request. In this case all the delegations from the National Societies shall vote first, then all the delegations from the States, then the delegations from the International Committee and from the League. The delegations from the National Societies and from the States shall be called in alphabetical order.

*Roll call*

6. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot if ten delegations so request. In this case the Chairman shall appoint from among the delegates of the members of the Conference three tellers who, after all the ballot papers have been collected, shall proceed to a count of the votes. A valid request for a vote by secret ballot shall take precedence over a valid request for a vote by roll call.

*Secret ballot*

7. After the Chairman has announced the beginning of voting, no delegate shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual voting procedure.

*Interruption of voting*

## **Rule 21**

### **Election of members of the Standing Commission**

1. Nominations for the Standing Commission shall be delivered in closed envelopes, with the curriculum vitae of each candidate, to the Chairman of the Bureau, forty-eight hours before the opening of the meeting in which the election will take place. The Bureau shall circulate the curriculum vitae of each candidate at least twenty-four hours before that meeting. When nominating candidates, personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution should be taken into account.

*Nominations*

2. The election process for the Standing Commission shall start immediately after the opening of the meeting at which the vote will take place.

*Beginning of the election process*

*Ballot*

3. The members of the Standing Commission referred to in Article 10, paragraph 4 of the Statutes shall be elected by secret ballot by the members of the Conference. For the purpose of determining the absolute majority required in terms of paragraph 4, a roll call of members shall be taken before voting begins.

*Elected candidates*

4. In the first ballot, the candidates obtaining an absolute majority shall be declared elected. If more than five candidates obtain an absolute majority, the five candidates obtaining the largest number of votes shall be declared elected. If less than five candidates obtain an absolute majority in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be held in which the candidate(s) obtaining the largest number of votes shall be declared elected.

*Ties*

5. In the case of a tie, subsequent ballots shall be held until the remaining candidate(s) has received a relative majority. After four ballots the total number of votes cast for each candidate in all four ballots shall be taken into consideration. If a tie still results, a decision shall be made by drawing lots.

*Candidates from the same National Society*

6. If two or more candidates from the same National Society are in a position to be declared elected, the candidate obtaining the largest number of votes shall be considered as elected.

## **Rule 22**

### **Proceedings of the Conference**

*Recording of the plenary meetings and of the plenary commissions*

1. Unless the Conference decides otherwise, the organization responsible for convening the Conference shall make the necessary arrangements for the recording of the plenary meetings and of the meetings of the plenary commissions of the Conference.

*Content of the proceedings*

2. The following at least shall constitute the proceedings of the Conference and be collected in one volume:

- the lists of participants (members and observers);
- the list of documents;
- the verbatim record of the plenary meetings of the Conference;
- the reports of the plenary commissions;
- the resolutions of the Conference.

3. The volume mentioned in paragraph 2 shall be published under the authority of the Standing Commission by the host organization and issued to the members of the Conference and to the observers invited to it, if possible not later than one year after it closes.

*Publication*

4. As far as possible summary reports of the plenary meetings of the Conference and of its commissions shall be prepared by the host organization and issued to the members of the Conference the day following such meetings.

*Daily reports*

### SECTION III: THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

#### **Rule 23**

##### **Place and date**

The place, date and duration of the Council shall be fixed by the Standing Commission in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 1 of the Statutes.

#### **Rule 24**

##### **Convocation**

When the Council meets on the occasion of a Conference, the organization responsible for convening the Conference shall also convene the Council. In all other cases the Standing Commission shall be responsible for the convocation.

#### **Rule 25**

##### **Provisional agenda**

The provisional agenda of the Council shall be prepared by the Standing Commission.

#### **Rule 26**

##### **Opening meeting**

1. The opening meeting of the Council, when it meets on the occasion of a Conference, shall be held before the opening of the Conference, at a time which takes into account the planned duration of the Council.

*Date*

*Chairmanship*

2. The Chairman of the Standing Commission shall chair the opening meeting until the Chairman of the Council has been elected.

*Election of  
chairmanship  
and secretaries*

3. In addition to the election of its Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its members, the Council shall elect secretaries.

### **Rule 27**

#### **Work of the Council**

Unless otherwise specified in the Statutes or in these Rules, the provisions of these Rules concerning the Conference shall be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the meetings of the Council.

### **Rule 28**

#### **Proceedings of the Council**

When the Council meets on the occasion of a Conference, the proceedings of the Council shall also be collected in the volume mentioned in Rule 22, paragraph 2.

## **SECTION IV: THE STANDING COMMISSION**

### **Rule 29**

#### **Convocation**

Immediately after the election of the members of the Standing Commission the Chairman of the Conference shall convoke the members of the new Commission who are present. These members shall decide by majority who shall be responsible for convening the first meeting of the Commission. If practicable, the first meeting, at which the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman shall be elected, should be held forthwith.

### **Rule 30**

#### **Quorum**

To be valid, the deliberations of the Standing Commission shall require a quorum of five members.

**Rule 31**  
**Proceedings of the Standing Commission**

When the Standing Commission meets on the occasion of a Conference in accordance with Rule 29, its proceedings shall be included in the volume mentioned in Rule 22, paragraph 2.

**SECTION V: FINAL PROVISIONS**

**Rule 32**  
**Amendments to the Statutes and to these Rules**

1. In pursuance of Article 20 of the Statutes, the text of proposed amendments to the Statutes or to these Rules shall be communicated to the Chairman of the Standing Commission in such time as will permit him to transmit copies thereof together with the comments of the International Committee and the League to the members of the Conference not later than six months before the opening session of the Conference.

*Communication of proposals*

2. The International Committee and the League shall present their comments to the proposed amendments in time to enable the Standing Commission to fulfil its obligation arising from the preceding paragraph.

*Comments of the International Committee and the League*

3. The Conference shall decide on which date any adopted amendment shall enter into force.

*Entry into force of the amendments*

**Rule 33**  
**Entry into force of these Rules**

1. These Rules shall replace the Rules of Procedure of the International Conference of the Red Cross adopted in 1952 by the Eighteenth Conference. Any earlier provision which conflicts with these Rules is repealed.

*Abrogation*

2. These Rules shall enter into force on 8 November 1986.

*Date*