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Rules of Procedure

NATO

North Atlantic Council



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1. The Board of the Council

1.1. Composition

The Board of the North Atlantic Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (hereinafter referred to as the Council) will be composed of the Secretary-General of the Council and the Deputy Secretary-General of NATO.

1.2. Competence of the Board

The competence of the Board may not be questioned by the delegates at any time and for any reason.

1.3. Chairpersons: Authorities and Responsibilities

1.3.1. Authority of the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General shall exercise ultimate authority over his Council, presiding in an equitable and objective manner. The Secretary-General 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 taken seriously into account by the Council. In case of disruptive or dilatory behaviour of any participants, the Secretary-General reserves the right to take appropriate action.

1.3.2. Responsibilities of the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General is responsible for all procedural matters pertaining to the Council, including, but not limited to, moderating the debate, determining the applicability of the rules and if necessary, clarifying the meaning of the existing rules without approval by the Council.

1.3.3. Authority of the Deputy Secretary-General

The Deputy Secretary-General shall have authority over all Council support operations and shall exercise ultimate authority over his Council in the absence of or after receiving appointment from the Secretary-General. The Deputy Secretary-General reserves the right to take appropriate actions to ensure the proper representation of country policies by the delegates. In particular, he can either take the floor, in order to promote his opinion or clarify the policy lines of the member states, or issue written statements addressed to the Council, at any time.

1.3.4. Responsibilities of the Deputy Secretary-General



THESSISMUN

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Deputy Secretary-General is responsible for all procedural matters pertaining to the Council, assisting the Secretary-General. The Deputy Secretary-General, in particular, has the duty to make remarks when a member state is out of policy at any given discussion and shall also be responsible for ensuring relevancy of the content and format of the Working Papers before their submission for verification by the conference's Secretariat. He shall also have a supervisory and reconciliatory role in the drafting procedure of the Communiqués under the scope of protecting the general interest of states.

1.4. Caucus of the Board

The Chairpersons reserve the right to halt the procedures within the Council in order to take 30 seconds of internal Caucus.

2. Delegations

2.1. Members

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the States parties to the Treaty establishing the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation meet within the North Atlantic Council.

2.2. Observers and Non-Council Members

In order to enhance co-operation and effectiveness of action, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has instituted partnerships with non-member states under the scope of its Strategic Concept and the Treaty of Washington. These non-Member States (hereinafter referred to as Partners) participate in the Council under the status of an Observer. The Secretary-General of the Council also reserves the right to invite at any time a Non-Council Member State to be present during Council sessions when it considers that the topics discussed affect the State's interests. Non-Council Members are granted the Observer status.

Both Partners and invited Non-Council Member States shall enjoy debating rights and participate in all procedural matters, but shall not participate in the Draft Communiqué approval procedure as described in rule 14.5, nor have the right to Submit Draft Communiqués and amendments.

2.3. Permission to Approach the Bench

Any delegate wishing to contact the Secretary-General for a very delicate matter may ask for permission to approach the Bench. This is a measure of last resort in case of emergency.



THESSISMUN

3. Parliamentary procedure

3.1. Roll Call

Attendance shall be kept by the Secretary-General with a Roll Call at the beginning of every session. Delegates shall establish their presence in the Council by raising their placards and declaring “Present”.

3.2. Procedural Matters

Procedural matters are those matters relating to the structure of the Council session as defined in the Rules of Procedure of ThessISMUN. They include but are not limited to, establishing speaking time, motions and adjournment of the Council session. All delegates must vote on procedural matters by raising their placards and no delegate may abstain.

3.3. Substantive Matters

Substantive matters are defined as those matters relating to the specific topic at hand. Substantive matters need a consensus in order to be approved by the Council.

3.3.1. Decision-making Process

The Council of NATO during ThessISMUN is composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the States parties to the North Atlantic Treaty working towards the adoption of Draft Communiqués through the process of consensus.

4. Quorum

Council activities and debate shall start when at least 50% +1 of the States parties to the North Atlantic Treaty are present. If quorum is not met thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled start time of the Council session, the Council shall start its session with the number of delegates already present, unless otherwise instructed by ThessISMUN Secretariat. Participants arriving during or after the Roll Call, are required to send a note to the Secretary-General stating their presence in the Council. As long as participants have not informed the Secretary-General of their arrival they will not be recognized or allowed to participate in the Council. The total number of delegates will be determined by the attendance list from the most recent Council session. If quorum is in question in the first Council 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 Secretary-General may at any time, and especially before entering voting procedures, revisit the quorum



THESSISMUN

at
his/her own discretion.

4.1. Motion to Verify the Quorum

Delegates may raise a Motion to Verify the Quorum, where the Secretary-General will proceed with Quorum confirmation by initiating a Roll Call. The Secretary-General can rule the motion dilatory without option for appeal.

5. Majority

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

5.1. Simple Majority

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

5.2. Two-thirds (2/3) Majority

A procedural matter requiring a two-thirds (2/3) majority to pass implies that two-thirds (2/3) of the present member states in the Council must vote in favour.

5.3. Consensus

Consensus is needed in order to reach a decision and adopt a Draft Communiqué. Consensus shall not be verified by a voting procedure, but shall be reached through debate. Consultations take place until a decision that is acceptable to all is reached. All NATO decisions are made by consensus, after discussion and consultation among member countries, due to the nature of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation as an Alliance. This means that when a NATO communiqué is announced, it is the expression of the collective will of all the sovereign states that are members of the Alliance.

6. Agenda

The Agenda items are ordered randomly. This cannot be considered binding for the order in which topics will be addressed by the Council. The Secretary-General may entertain a Motion to Set the Agenda immediately after setting the quorum in order to define which topic area takes precedent in the debate. Only topics set on the provisional Agenda provided by ThessISMUN shall be considered by the Council.



6.1. Motion to set the Agenda.

Following the Motion to Verify the Quorum, a Motion to Set the Agenda on a specific topic will be in order. The Secretary-General will consider the motions in the order in which they were made. The Secretary-General will take one (1) speaker in favour and one (1) speaker against the motion and proceed with a vote. The speaker's time in favour and against the motion shall be equal and determined by the Secretary-General and the speakers will receive the floor in rotation (in favour – against). If the motion passes, requiring a simple majority, the Agenda will be set in the manner suggested by the motion. If the motion fails, the Secretary-General shall consider the next motion and repeat the aforementioned process. If no Motion to Set the Agenda receives the necessary majority then the Council will discuss as first the topic 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 the same for the duration of the conference.

6.2. Alteration of the Agenda

In the event of an international crisis or emergency, the Secretary General may call upon the Council to table debate on the current topic area in order for the more urgent matter to be addressed to immediately. After a communiqué has been approved on the crisis topic, the Council will return to debate the tabled topic. If a communiqué on the crisis topic is rejected, the Council may return to debate on the tabled topic area only at the discretion of the Secretary General or his/her Deputies.

7. Debate

7.1. Formal Debate

The Council shall by default be in Formal Debate. Open Debate is considered the appropriate form of Formal Debate. Once the Agenda is set the Secretary-General will entertain a Motion to Launch Open Debate on the discussed Topic Area.

7.2. Informal Debate

Formal debate may be interrupted by informal debate which is considered a more flexible and versatile form of discussion. The two recognized forms of informal debate are Moderated and Unmoderated caucus. When the floor is open after the instruction of the Board, the member of the Council can propose a Motion for a Moderated caucus or a Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus.



THESSISMUN

7.3. Recognition

A Delegate may only address the Council if he/she has received permission from the Board.

7.4. Interruptions

A speaker may not be interrupted by another delegate, unless the delegate has risen to a Point of Personal Privilege. A Point of Order, Right of Reply or Point of Parliamentary Inquiry cannot interrupt a speaker. Only once a speaker has concluded and the floor is given back to the Secretary-General, a delegate may rise to a Point of Order, Point of Parliamentary Inquiry or Right of Reply.

8. Speeches

The Debate is opened following a Motion to Launch open Debate from a delegate and a delegate wishing to receive the floor may either raise his/her placard when the Chairpersons call for Delegates to do so or send a note to the Board. A delegate may address the Council only after he/she has been recognized by the Chairpersons and for an allotted speaking time that has been predefined. Speakers must deliver their remarks in a timely manner, in relation to the subject under discussion and delegates are obliged to address their correspondents always according to diplomatic courtesy. When proposing a Motion to Launch Open Debate the delegate has to propose individual speaking time, which can be altered at a later stage of the debate by a Motion to Set the Speaking Time.

8.1. Motion to Launch Open Debate

In order for the Council to enter formal debate there should be a Motion to Launch Open Debate on the discussed Topic Area. The motion requires a simple majority to pass. While in Open Debate, any participating member wishing to speak should raise their placard, upon request of the Board, and be recognized by the Board. The delegate has to propose an individual speaking time when proposing the motion.

8.2. Motion to Set Speaking Time

A Delegate may move to set a time limit on speeches. This motion is needed in order to specify speaking time during Open Debate. It can be re-proposed by a member of the Council should there be a need to adjust speaking time of the formal debate. The Board may either rule the motion dilatory at his/her discretion or put it to vote.



THESSISMUN

9. Points

9.1. Point of Personal Privilege

A delegate may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege if a matter impairs the delegate's participation in Council activities. The Board shall try to effectively address the source of impairment. A Point of Personal Privilege can interrupt the speaker in any case. However, this point should be used with the utmost discretion.

9.2. Point of Order

A delegate may rise to a Point of Order if a delegate or the Board are not properly following the Rules of Procedure. The Board 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 Board may not be appealed. This point may not interrupt a speaker.

9.3. Point of Parliamentary Inquiry

A delegate may rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry to request an explanation on the Rules of Procedure by the Board. This point may not interrupt a speaker.

10. Rights

10.1. 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 does not constitute sufficient justification for a Right of Reply. The Secretary-General will recognize the Right of Reply at his/her discretion as well as decide on how to resolve the matter. This point may not interrupt a speaker but should be addressed the moment he/she will have finished his/her speech. Should the Secretary-General 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.

11. Motions

Motions are proposed by the delegates in order to facilitate the debate or the overall procedure by raising their placards and waiting to be recognised. All proposed motions shall be first approved by the Board which shall then ask for second and objections (as defined in rule 12). Should the motion face objections the most disruptive one shall take precedence in the voting procedure.



11.1. Motion for a Moderated Caucus

A Delegate proposing a Motion for a Moderated Caucus must indicate the total duration of the caucus, speaking time for each individual speaker and the purpose of the motion. The Secretary-General may suggest a more appropriate total duration, speaker's time or purpose, or may rule the Moderated Caucus not in order without the possibility of appeal. If the motion passes, the Committee will enter informal debate whereby the Secretary-General will recognize at his/her discretion delegates who raise their placards to speak about the issue at hand.

11.2. Motion to Extend the Moderated Caucus

A delegate may propose a Motion to Extend the Moderated Caucus if he/she feels that additional time benefits the work of the Council. The delegate proposing an Extension of the Moderated Caucus must suggest a duration for the extension, not exceeding total duration of the initial Moderated Caucus. The individual speaker's time and the purpose of the caucus remain the same. The Secretary-General may suggest a more appropriate total duration and put it to vote or may rule the motion out of order without the possibility of appeal. Only one extension of the Moderated Caucus is allowed. Purpose and speaking time shall remain intact.

a. Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus

A delegate proposing a Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus must indicate a total duration and purpose for the Caucus. The Secretary-General may suggest a more appropriate caucus length or topic and put it to vote or may rule the Unmoderated Caucus out of order without possibility of appeal. Once the motion passes, the Council will start an informal discussion on the topic specified in the motion without leaving the conference room.

b. Motion to Extend the Unmoderated Caucus

A delegate may move to extend the Unmoderated Caucus if he/she feels that additional time would benefit the work of the Council. The delegate who proposes a Motion to Extend the Unmoderated Caucus must suggest a duration for the extension, not exceeding the initial Unmoderated Caucus. The Secretary-General may suggest a more appropriate caucus duration and put it to vote or may rule the Extension of the Unmoderated Caucus out of order without the possibility of appeal. Only one extension of the Unmoderated Caucus is allowed.

c. Motion to Table Debate on a Topic

A delegate may move to Table Debate in order to end the debate on a substantive issue without concluding the discussion and reaching a consensus on a draft Communiqué that may be on the



THESSISMUN

floor.

If the Board rules the motion in order, one (1) delegate shall speak in favour and one (1) delegate shall speak against before proceeding with a vote. After the new topic has been discussed according to the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary-General shall entertain a Motion to Return to a Dismissed Topic as defined in article 11.6. This motion requires a 2/3 majority in order to pass.

d. Motion to Return to a Dismissed Topic

If a Motion to Table the Debate passes, the Board may entertain a Motion to Return to a Dismissed Topic. In that event, the Board will entertain one (1) speaker in favour and one (1) speaker against the motion. This motion requires a 2/3 majority in order to pass.

e. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

A delegate may propose a Motion to Adjourn the Meeting in order to suspend all Council activities until the next scheduled meeting. The Secretary-General may rule the motion out of order without the possibility of appeal or put it to vote. The motion requires a simple majority in order to pass.

f. Motion to Adjourn the Session

A delegate may propose a motion to adjourn the Session in order to cease permanently all Council activities. The Secretary-General may rule the motion out of order without the possibility of appeal or put it to vote. The motion is debatable thus the Secretary-General will entertain one (1) speaker in favour and one speaker (1) against, at his/her discretion. The motion requires a 2/3 majority in order to pass.

12. Seconds & Objections

After a delegate proposes a motion, the Board may ask for seconds, i.e. delegates agreeing with the motion. All 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, i.e. delegates disagreeing with the proposed motion. All the delegates wishing to express their objection will raise their placards. If there are no objections, the motion will automatically pass. If there are objections, the board will enter voting procedure. This motion is in order only to be used for the end of the conference.



13. Voting

Voting is in order only for procedural matters. Each delegate of the Council has one vote and must demonstrate his/her voting intentions by raising his/her placard at the Secretary-General's request unless there is a Roll Call Vote (see rule 13.1). Delegates must vote in favour or against. There are no abstentions, and no delegate shall vote on behalf of another delegate.

13.1. Roll Call Vote

This motion is in order when the voting result on a procedural matter remains undefined. The Secretary-General may rule the motion out of order without the possibility of appeal. The Roll Call starts from a delegate randomly selected by the Secretary-General.

14. Communiqués of the Council

14.1. Working Paper

A Working Paper is an informal document used by delegates to work on building a Draft Communiqué. A Working Paper will be distributed at the Board's discretion if requested by a Delegate. A Working Paper can be presented by the delegate when it is the delegate's turn to speak during the debate.

14.2. Communiqués of the North Atlantic Council

14.2.1. Format

Draft Communiqués must be properly formatted according to the guidelines found in the "ThessISMUN Draft Communiqué Writing" paper.

14.2.2. Sponsor

The main contributor of the draft Communiqué is recognized as the Sponsor. There is only one Sponsor for each Draft Communiqué. The Sponsor must be present for a draft Communiqué to be introduced to the floor. The Sponsor must agree to support a Communiqué, unless major changes have been introduced through the amendment process.

14.2.3. Introduction of a Draft Communiqué

A Delegate may propose a Motion to Introduce a Draft Communiqué.

Once the Working Paper has been assigned a Draft Communiqué number by the Secretary-General, the Board will entertain a motion to introduce the Draft Communiqué, requiring a



THESSISMUN

simple majority. Once the motion passes, the Secretary- General shall invite the Sponsor of the Draft Communiqué to read out only the operative clauses of the Draft Communiqué to the Council. The Sponsor or one of the Signatories will then be recognized for five (5) minutes to speak in favour of the Draft Communiqué. The speaker may yield his/her remaining time to questions or to another delegate if he/she wishes to do so.

14.2.4. Withdrawal of a Draft Communiqué

A draft Communiqué may be withdrawn by its sponsor any time before the amendment procedure starts, as defined by section 14.3. This request should be submitted in written form to the Secretary-General. A draft Communiqué may not be withdrawn if any amendment to it is on the floor.

14.3. Amendments

An Amendment may add, strike out or revise a part of the Draft Communiqué. The Amendment has to be first approved by the Board. It is highly recommended, that there is at least one co-sponsor of the Amendment. It is at the discretion of the Board to define the period of time, during which the floor will be open for Amendments.

14.3.1. Motion to Introduce Amendments

A Delegate may propose a Motion to Introduce Amendments after the time for the submission of Amendments has elapsed. If the motion passes, the Secretary-General will introduce to the Council all Amendments approved by the Board.

14.3.2. Non Substantive Amendments

Amendments correcting grammatical, spelling or formatting mistakes will be automatically adopted without a vote from the Council, at the discretion of the Secretary-General. Following the initial reading of the draft Communiqué by its Sponsor, delegates are permitted to point out any such problems to the Secretary- General.

14.3.3. Substantive Amendments

Substantive Amendments to a Draft Communiqué require approval from the Secretary- General to be introduced. Such Amendments will be approved following the procedure described in Rule 14.5. Amendments to Amendments are out of order. The Secretary- General reserves the right to assign one (1) speaker for and one (1) speaker against each Substantive Amendment. Due to the nature of the decision process in the NAC, all Amendments to a Draft Communiqué must be approved by reaching a consensus, as described in rule 5.3.



THESSISMUN

14.4. Withdrawal

The Sponsor of a Substantive Amendment may request its withdrawal at his/her discretion, before its adoption by the Council.

14.5. Approval of Amendments

After the Secretary-General has concluded the Introduction of Amendments as described in Rule 14.3.1., he/she will read one by one all Amendments, asking for Objections. Should there be any Objections, the Council shall enter a short period of debate defined by the Secretary-General, in order to reach a consensus. When the allotted period of time for debate has elapsed, the Secretary-General shall ask the Council whether consensus has been achieved, taking this result as final. In case no consensus can be reached, the Council will disregard the Amendment at hand. All subsequent Amendments shall be discussed in accordance with the aforementioned procedure, and in the order defined by their assigned number. If one Amendment implies the rejection of a second Amendment, the second Amendment will not be discussed. An Amendment that has been approved by the Council shall be automatically integrated into the Draft Communiqué. Once all Amendments relating to a Draft Communiqué have been discussed and approved by the Council, the Board shall read the operative clauses as they have been modified.

15. Decision-making Process

15.1. General

The Council usually reaches decisions by allowing discussions to continue until a consensus is reached. In the event of a stalemate, the Council may use a tour de table (see rule 15.1.2. below).

15.1.1. Consensus

For the decision process demanding consensus, refer to rule 5.3., above.

15.1.2. Tour de table

A Tour de Table shall be conducted at the discretion of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General requests each delegate to give a short summary of his/her position on the matter under discussion and express any disagreement, in order to determine whether a compromise is possible.



THESSISMUN

15.2. Public Statements

In the event of a crisis, the Council may exercise its right to issue a Public Statement. Its format is the same as that of the Draft Communiqué. Its purpose is to declare the Council's position on an unexpected crisis.

15.2.1. Motion to Approve the Public Statement

A delegate may propose a Motion to Approve the Public Statement, in order to verify whether a consensus on the Statement has been achieved. The Secretary-General may rule the Motion out of order without the possibility of appeal, or put it to vote. The motion requires a 2/3 majority in order to pass.

15.3. Approval of Communiqués

The approval of Communiqués is subject to the procedure described in Rule 15.3.1. Once a Motion to Close Debate has passed, the Draft Communiqué on the table shall be considered as the final Communiqué of the Council upon which consensus has been reached.

15.3.1 Motion to Approve the Draft Communiqué

A delegate may propose a Motion to Approve the Draft Communiqué in order to verify whether a consensus on the Draft Communiqué has been achieved. The Secretary-General may rule the motion out of order without the possibility of appeal or put it to vote. The motion requires a 2/3 majority in order to pass. Once the motion has passed, the Secretary-General shall ask for any objections to the Draft Communiqué, if there are no objections the draft communiqué is considered to be adopted. If there are objections the Council shall enter a Tour de table (see above 15.1.2) with an individual speaker's time defined by the Secretary-General. Delegates objecting should refer to the specific articles causing their disagreement. Should the Board observe disagreements among the member states, the Secretary-General will entertain and facilitate a short period of debate, only on the articles causing disagreement as stated by the objecting delegates, in order to identify possible grounds for compromise. She/he shall play a reconciliatory role in order for the Council to reach a consensus.

The Secretary-General maintains the right to make any necessary adjustments to the content of the Draft Communiqué guided by the outcome of the debate and based on the consent of the member states. After the conclusion of the debate, the Secretary-General shall once more verify the consensus on the Draft Communiqué, asking for objections, considering this result to be final.



THESSISMUN

15.4. Motion to Close Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion

After a consensus has been reached on the Draft Communiqué, a delegate may propose a Motion to Close Debate in order to end the debate on the Topic Area under discussion. The Secretary-General may rule the motion out of order without the possibility of appeal or put it to vote. The motion is debatable thus the Secretary-General will entertain one (1) speaker in favour and one speaker (1) against, at his/her discretion. The motion requires a 2/3 majority in order to pass.



16. Appendix of Points and Motions

Rule	Description	Debatable	Votes Required	Interrupts Speaker
Point of Personal Privilege	Feeling discomfort	No	No	Yes
Point of Order	To point out 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 Speaking Time	Define speaking time limit	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion for the Verification of Quorum	Seeking to verify the presence of delegates	No	No	No
Motion to Set the Agenda	Setting the Agenda and individual speaking time	Yes(1+/1-)	Simple Majority	No
Motion for a Roll Call	Roll Call Vote	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion for a Moderated Caucus	Proceed to a Moderated Caucus	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus	Proceed to an Unmoderated Caucus	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Approve the Public Statement	Verify the consensus on the Public Statement	No	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to introduce a Draft Communiqué	Introduction of a Draft Communiqué	No	Simple Majority	No



THESSISMUN

Motion to Introduce an Amendment	Introduction of an Amendment	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Table Debate	Postpone debate	Yes (1+/1-)	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Resume Debate	Resume a tabled debate	Yes (1+/1-)	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Approve the Draft Communiqué	Verify the consensus on the Draft Communiqué	No	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Close Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion	Close debate on the Topic Area	Yes (1+/1-)	2/3 Majority	No
Motion to Adjourn Meeting	Adjourn until next scheduled meeting	No	Simple Majority	No
Motion to Adjourn the Session	Close the Session at the end of the Conference	Yes (1+/1-)	2/3 Majority	No

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