

I. Introduction

1. The present document, which corresponds to the preliminary list circulated on 29 February 2000 (A/55/50), has been prepared in accordance with the recommendation of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, as set forth in paragraph 17 (b) of annex II to Assembly resolution 2837 (XXVI) of 17 December 1971.
2. The provisional agenda provided for in rule 12 of the rules of procedure will appear on 7 July 2000 (A/55/150).
3. An addendum to this document (A/55/100/Add.1) will be issued at the opening of the session in accordance with paragraph 17 (c) of annex II to resolution 2837 (XXVI).
4. The fifty-fourth session will convene at United Nations Headquarters on Tuesday, 5 September 2000, at 3 p.m.

II. Annotated list

1. Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Namibia

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/239 of 8 June 1999, the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly shall open on Tuesday, 5 September 2000.

Rule 30 of the rules of procedure provides that, at the opening of each session of the General Assembly, the Chairman of that delegation from which the President of the previous session was elected shall preside until the Assembly has elected a President for the session. Accordingly, the temporary President is not necessarily the individual who presided at the preceding session (for the election of the President, see item 4).

2. Minute of silent prayer or meditation

Rule 62 of the rules of procedure provides that, immediately after the opening of the 1st plenary meeting and immediately preceding the closing of the final plenary meeting of each session of the General Assembly, the President shall invite the representatives to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation. This provision was incorporated in the rules of procedure at the fourth session (resolution 362 (IV), annex I).

3. Credentials of representatives to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

(b) Report of the Credentials Committee

In accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure, the credentials of representatives and the names of members of a delegation are to be submitted to the Secretary-General, if possible not less than one week before the opening of the session. The credentials must be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Under rule 28 of the rules of procedure, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members is appointed by the General Assembly at the beginning of each session on the proposal of the President. The members of the Committee are traditionally appointed at the 1st plenary meeting, on the proposal of the temporary President and before the election of the President for the session. The Committee elects a Chairman, but no Vice-Chairman or Rapporteur.

On completion of its work, the Committee submits a report to the General Assembly.

At its fifty-fourth session,⁵ the General Assembly appointed the following States members of the Credentials Committee: Austria, Bolivia, China, Philippines, Russian Federation, South Africa, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago and United States of America (decision 54/301). At that session, the Assembly approved the reports of the Committee (resolutions 54/6 A and B).

⁵ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 3):

- (a) Reports of the Credentials Committee: A/54/475 and Add.1;
- (b) Resolutions 54/6 A and B and decision 54/301;
- (c) Plenary meetings: A/54/PV.1, 38 and 75.

Document: Report of the Credentials Committee.

4. Election of the President of the General Assembly

Under rule 31 of the rules of procedure, the President of the General Assembly is elected by the Assembly and holds office until the close of the session at which he was elected. In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election is held by secret ballot and there are no nominations. The President is elected by a simple majority. It should be noted, however, that since the thirty-second session, with the exception of the thirty-sixth, thirty-eighth and forty-sixth sessions, the President has been elected by acclamation.

At its thirty-third session, in 1978, the General Assembly decided (resolution 33/138, annex, para. 1) that, in the election of the President, regard should be had for equitable geographical rotation of the office among the following States:

- (a) African States;
- (b) Asian States;
- (c) Eastern European States;
- (d) Latin American States;
- (e) Western European and other States.

At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly decided that the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponded to the number of seats to be filled should become standard and that the same practice should apply to the election of the President of the Assembly, unless a delegation specifically requested a vote on a given election (decision 34/401, para. 16).

The names of the past Presidents of the General Assembly are listed in annex I.⁶

5. Election of the officers of the Main Committees

The General Assembly has six Main Committees. At its forty-seventh session, by its resolution 47/233 of 17 August 1993, the Assembly decided to amend rule 98 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly according to paragraph 1 of the resolution, which reads as follows:

“1. *Decides* that the Main Committees of the General Assembly shall be as follows:

- (a) Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee);
- (b) Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee);
- (c) Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee);
- (d) Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee);
- (e) Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee);
- (f) Legal Committee (Sixth Committee);”.

⁶ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 4):

- (a) Decision 54/302;
- (b) Plenary meeting: A/54/PV.1.

At its fifty-second session, the General Assembly decided to amend the first sentence of rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly to read: "Each Main Committee shall elect a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur" (resolution 52/163, para. 1).

Rule 103 states that the elections shall be held by secret ballot unless the Committee decides otherwise in an election where only one candidate is standing. Since in the great majority of cases only one candidate is nominated, most officers of Main Committees are elected by acclamation.

In addition, rule 103 provides that the nomination of each candidate shall be limited to one speaker, after which the Committee shall immediately proceed to the election.

Rule 99 (a) stipulates that all the Main Committees shall, during the first week of the session, hold the elections provided for in rule 103.

At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly decided, on 29 July 1994 (resolution 48/264, annex II), that the six Chairmen of the Main Committees should be elected according to the following pattern:

- (a) One representative from an African State;
- (b) One representative from an Asian State;
- (c) One representative from an Eastern European State;
- (d) One representative from a Latin American or Caribbean State;
- (e) One representative from a Western European or other State;
- (f) The sixth chairmanship shall rotate over a period of 20 sessions according to the following pattern:
 - (i) One representative from an African State;
 - (ii) One representative from an Asian State;
 - (iii) One representative from a Latin American or Caribbean State;
 - (iv) One representative from an African State;
 - (v) One representative from an Asian State;
 - (vi) One representative from an African State;
 - (vii) One representative from a Latin American or Caribbean State;
 - (viii) One representative from an Asian State;
 - (ix) One representative from an African State;
 - (x) One representative from an Asian State;
 - (xi) One representative from a Latin American or Caribbean State;
 - (xii) One representative from an African State;
 - (xiii) One representative from an Asian State;
 - (xiv) One representative from an African State;
 - (xv) One representative from a Latin American or Caribbean State;
 - (xvi) One representative from an Asian State;
 - (xvii) One representative from an African State;
 - (xviii) One representative from an Asian State;

- (xix) One representative from a Latin American or Caribbean State;
- (xx) One representative from an African State.

The Chairmen of the Main Committees are generally elected on the first day of the session. For practical reasons, the elections are held in the General Assembly Hall under the chairmanship of the President of the Assembly. However, it should be noted that this does not involve a plenary meeting of the Assembly, but a series of consecutive meetings of the six Main Committees. The three Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of each Main Committee are elected later, during the first week of the session.

The names of the officers of the Main Committees from the twentieth session onwards are listed in annex II.⁷

6. Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly

The President of the General Assembly is assisted by 21 Vice-Presidents. The duties involved are performed by heads of delegations of Member States, and not by individuals elected in their personal capacity. The Assembly decided on four occasions to increase the number of Vice-Presidents (resolutions 1104 (XI), 1192 (XII), 1990 (XVIII) and 33/138).

Under rule 31 of the rules of procedure, the Vice-Presidents are elected by the General Assembly and hold office until the close of the session at which they were elected. In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election is held by secret ballot and there are no nominations. Vice-Presidents are elected by a simple majority. It should be noted, however, that since the thirty-second session, with the exception of the thirty-sixth, thirty-eighth, forty-first and forty-second sessions in the case of one of the regional groups, the Vice-Presidents have been elected by acclamation.

Rule 31 also provides that the Vice-Presidents shall be elected after the election of the Chairmen of the Main Committees (see item 5), in such a way as to ensure the representative character of the General Committee (see item 8).

At its thirty-third session, in 1978, the General Assembly decided (resolution 33/138, annex, paras. 2 and 3) that the 21 Vice-Presidents should be elected according to the following pattern:

- (a) Six representatives from African States;
- (b) Five representatives from Asian States;
- (c) One representative from an Eastern European State;
- (d) Three representatives from Latin American States;
- (e) Two representatives from Western European or other States;
- (f) Five representatives from the permanent members of the Security Council.

The election of the President of the Assembly has the effect, however, of reducing by one the number of vice-presidencies allocated to the region from which the President is elected.

⁷ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 5):

- (a) Decision 54/303;
- (b) Meetings of the Main Committees: A/C.1/54/PV.1, A/C.4/54/SR.1, A/C.2/54/SR.1, A/C.3/54/SR.1, A/C.5/54/SR.1 and A/C.6/54/SR.1;
- (c) Plenary meeting: A/54/PV.2.

The Vice-Presidents are generally elected on the first day of the session.

At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly decided that the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponded to the number of seats to be filled should become standard and the same practice should apply to the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, unless a delegation specifically requested a vote on a given election (decision 34/401, para. 16).

The names of the States that have held the office of Vice-President of the General Assembly are listed in annex III.⁸

7. Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations

Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Charter stipulates that, while the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Council so requests.

Article 12, paragraph 2, provides that the Secretary-General, with the consent of the Security Council, shall notify the General Assembly at each session of any matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Council. He is similarly to notify the Assembly immediately if the Council ceases to deal with such matters.

At its fifty-fourth session,⁹ the General Assembly took note of the communication from the Secretary-General (A/54/398) without discussion (decision 54/410).

Document: Note by the Secretary-General.

8. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Rules 12 to 15 of the rules of procedure deal with the agenda for regular sessions.

Provisional agenda

Under rule 12 of the rules of procedure, the provisional agenda is to be communicated to the Members of the United Nations at least 60 days before the opening of the session (see annotation for item 1). The preliminary list of items to be included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-fifth session (see sect. I, para. 1) was circulated on 29 February 2000 (A/55/50). The provisional agenda for the fifty-fifth session (A/55/150) will appear on 7 July 2000.

Rule 13 of the rules of procedure indicates what items shall or may be included in the provisional agenda.

⁸ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 6):

- (a) Decision 54/304;
- (b) Plenary meeting: A/54/PV.2.

⁹ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 7):

- (a) Note by the Secretary-General: A/54/398;
- (b) Decision 54/410;
- (c) Plenary meeting: A/54/PV.38.

Supplementary items

Rule 14 of the rules of procedure provides that any Member or principal organ of the United Nations or the Secretary-General may, at least 30 days before the date fixed for the opening of a regular session, request the inclusion of supplementary items in the agenda. Such items shall be placed on a supplementary list, which shall be communicated to the Members of the United Nations at least 20 days before the opening of the session.

The supplementary list (A/55/200) will be issued on 16 August 2000.

Additional items

Rule 15 of the rules of procedure stipulates, *inter alia*, that additional items of an important and urgent character, proposed for inclusion in the agenda less than 30 days before the opening of a regular session or during a regular session, may be placed on the agenda if the General Assembly so decides by a majority of the members present and voting.

Consideration of the draft agenda by the General Committee

Rules 38 to 44 of the rules of procedure deal with the composition, organization and functions of the General Committee. The Committee is composed of the President of the General Assembly, who presides (see item 4 and annex I), the 21 Vice-Presidents of the Assembly (see item 6 and annex III) and the Chairmen of the Main Committees (see item 5 and annex II).

The General Committee usually meets on the second day of the session for the purpose of making recommendations to the General Assembly concerning the adoption of the agenda, the allocation of items and the organization of the work of the Assembly. For this purpose, it has before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing the draft agenda (provisional agenda, supplementary items and additional items), the proposed allocation of items and a number of recommendations concerning the organization of the session.

At the fifty-fifth session, because the Millennium Summit is scheduled to begin on the second day of the session, it is envisaged that the General Committee will meet on the third day of the session.

Document: Memorandum by the Secretary-General, A/BUR/55/1.

Adoption of the agenda by the General Assembly¹⁰

The final agenda, the allocation of items included in the agenda and arrangements for the organization of the session are adopted by the General Assembly by a simple majority.

Rule 23 of the rules of procedure provides, *inter alia*, that debate on the inclusion of an item in the agenda, when that item has been recommended for inclusion by the General Committee, shall be limited to three speakers in favour of, and three against, the inclusion.

9. General debate

At the beginning of the session, the General Assembly devotes a period of two weeks to the general debate, during which heads of delegations may state the views of their Governments on any item before the Assembly.

In accordance with paragraph 46 of annex V to the rules of procedure, the list of speakers wishing to take part in the general debate is closed at the end of the third day after the opening of the debate.

At the fifty-fourth session, 19 plenary meetings were devoted to the general debate (A/54/PV.4–22), during which 181 speakers took the floor.¹¹

10. Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization¹

Article 98 of the Charter requires the Secretary-General to make an annual report to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization. That report is included in the provisional agenda of the Assembly pursuant to rule 13 (a) of the rules of procedure.

¹⁰ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 8):

- (a) Preliminary list: A/54/50;
- (b) Annotated preliminary list: A/54/100 and Corr.1;
- (c) Provisional agenda: A/54/150;
- (d) Supplementary list: A/54/200;
- (e) Memorandum by the Secretary-General: A/BUR/54/1 and Add.1;
- (f) Reports of the General Committee: A/54/250 and Corr.1 and Add.1-3;
- (g) Agenda: A/54/251 and Add.1-5;
- (h) Allocation of agenda items: A/54/252 and Corr.1 and Add.1-5;
- (i) Annotated agenda: A/54/100/Add.1;
- (j) Letters from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences: A/54/313 and Add.1 and 2;
- (k) Notes by the Secretary-General: A/54/231, A/54/234, A/54/236 and Add.1 and A/54/237;
- (l) Letters from Austria: A/54/191; Greece: A/54/192; Australia, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, India, Namibia, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain and Sweden: A/54/193; Burkina Faso, El Salvador, the Gambia, Grenada, Honduras, Liberia, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Solomon Islands and Swaziland: A/54/194 and Add.1; Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe: A/54/232; South Africa: A/54/233; Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Ukraine: A/54/235; Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Ukraine and Zimbabwe: A/54/238;
- (m) Decisions 54/401, 54/402 A and B, 54/403 A to D and 54/465;
- (n) Meetings of the General Committee: A/BUR/54/SR.1-5;
- (o) Plenary meetings: A/54/PV.2-4, 33, 44, 70, 88-90, 93, 97 and 98.

¹¹ At the fifty-third session, 20 plenary meetings were devoted to the general debate, during which 180 speakers took the floor.

At its fifty-fourth session,¹² the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General (decision 54/408).

Document: Report of the Secretary-General, Supplement No. 1 (A/55/1).

11. Report of the Security Council¹

The Security Council (see item 15 (a)) submits an annual report to the General Assembly under Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter; the Assembly considers the report in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 1. The Council's report is included in the provisional agenda of the Assembly pursuant to rule 13 (b) of the rules of procedure.

The General Assembly usually takes note of the report of the Security Council without discussion. However, at its twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh sessions, in 1971 and 1972, the Assembly, in connection with its consideration of the Council's report, decided to seek the views of Member States on ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of the Council in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Charter (resolutions 2864 (XXVI) and 2991 (XXVII)). At its twenty-eighth session, the Assembly drew the attention of the Council, when considering steps to enhance its effectiveness in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Charter, to the views and suggestions submitted by Member States in response to the above-mentioned resolutions as contained in the Secretary-General's reports on the matter (A/8447 and Add.1 and A/9243) (resolution 3186 (XXVIII)). At its fifty-first session, the Assembly invited the Security Council, through an appropriate procedure or mechanism, to update the General Assembly on a regular basis on the steps it had taken or was contemplating with respect to improving its reporting to the Assembly (resolution 51/193).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹³ the General Assembly took note of the report of the Security Council covering the period from 16 June 1998 to 15 June 1999 (decision 54/409).

Document: Report of the Security Council covering the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000, Supplement No. 2 (A/55/2).

12. Report of the Economic and Social Council

Themes for the substantive session of 2000 of the Council

At its substantive session of 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided that the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2000 of the Council would be devoted to the consideration of the theme: "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy" (Council decision 1999/281). The theme is relevant and complementary to General Assembly resolution 54/231, entitled "Role of the United Nations in promoting

¹² References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 10):

- (a) Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization: Supplement No. 1 (A/54/1);
- (b) Decision 54/408;
- (c) Plenary meetings: A/54/PV.4, 27, 29, 32 and 33.

¹³ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 11):

- (a) Report of the Security Council: Supplement No. 2 (A/54/2);
- (b) Decision 54/409;
- (c) Plenary meetings: A/54/PV.35–37.

development in the context of globalization and interdependence”. Assembly resolution 54/201, entitled “Science and technology for development”, is also relevant.

The coordination segment will be devoted to the consideration of the cross-sectoral theme “Assessment of the progress made within the United Nations system, through the conference reviews, in the promotion of an integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields”.

In accordance with Council decision 1999/281, the coordination segment will also be devoted to the consideration of the “Coordinated implementation by the United Nations system of the Habitat Agenda”. By selecting this theme, the Council has met the request made by the General Assembly to the Council most recently in its resolution 53/180 to devote its coordination segment in 2000 to human settlements issues and the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The Assembly also invited the Council actively to promote and coordinate the role of the regional commissions in the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the regional and subregional levels, and requested organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and the funds and programmes to contribute to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

At its organizational session for 2000, the Economic and Social Council decided that the theme of the humanitarian affairs segment should be “Strengthening the coordination of humanitarian response and the role of technology in mitigating the effects of natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies, including conflicts, with particular reference to the displacement of persons arising therefrom” (decision 2000/206).

At its fifty-fourth session,¹⁴ the General Assembly took note of the relevant chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1999 (decision 54/451).

¹⁴ References for the fifty-fourth session (agenda item 12):

- (a) Report of the Economic and Social Council: Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3 and Add.1 and 2);
- (b) Reports of the Secretary-General:
 - (i) Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1999: A/54/443 and Add.1;
 - (ii) Analysis of the organizational structure and the personnel and technical resources of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat: A/54/520 and Add.1;
- (c) Notes by the Secretary-General transmitting:
 - (i) Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on the United Nations Population Award: A/54/407;
 - (ii) Progress report by the Director of the United Nations Staff College at Turin, Italy: A/54/481;
 - (iii) Report of the Advisory Committee on the analysis of the organizational structure and the personnel and technical resources of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat: A/54/657;
- (d) Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee): A/54/581 (items 94 and 12);
- (e) Report of the Second Committee: A/54/594;
- (f) Report of the Third Committee: A/54/606;
- (g) Report of the Fifth Committee: A/54/668;
- (h) Resolution 54/85 and decisions 54/437, 54/438, 54/449 to 54/452, 54/461 and 54/464;
- (i) Meetings of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee): A/C.4/54/SR.3-7;
- (j) Meetings of the Second Committee: A/C.2/54/SR.3-8 and 36, 39, 42, 43 and 51;
- (k) Meeting of the Third Committee: A/C.3/54/SR.56;
- (l) Meeting of the Fifth Committee: A/C.5/54/SR.44;
- (m) Plenary meetings: A/54/PV.71, 83, 87 and 88.