

## **Guidelines for the submission of proposals in the General Assembly**

***NOTE: A minimum of four full business days' advance notice before consideration of the item is required to process a proposal (draft resolution/draft decision) as a limited distribution ("L.") document in all official languages. (This period includes three full days for processing, counting from the day following the day of submission, and takes into account rule 78 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.)***

Delegations should submit proposals in person to a representative of the General Assembly Affairs Branch (GAAB) on the 30th floor of the Secretariat Building or in the General Assembly Hall during plenary meetings. The following are required:

- Electronic version of the text (Microsoft Word file submitted by email or on a USB key)
- Hard copy of the text (signed and dated on each page)
- Signature of representative of delegation on submission certificate (provided by GAAB at time of submission)

### **TIP: SUBMITTING A DRAFT RESOLUTION**

- To reserve rooms for consultations on draft resolutions or decisions before submission, please contact the Meetings Management Section at (212) 963-8114 or (212) 963-7351.
- To submit a draft resolution for issuance in the six official languages, please contact Ms. Gal Buyanover at (212) 963-2986 or gal.buyanover@un.org.
- To obtain information on the programme of work, please contact Ms. Radhika Ochalik at (212) 963-3233 or ochalik@un.org.

For draft resolutions and draft decisions ("L.--" documents) based on previous resolutions or decisions, the official A/RES document (available on the Official Document System at <https://documents.un.org>) must be used as the base text. All new text and changes to the old text must be clearly indicated using the Track Changes feature in Microsoft Word (see details below).

For revised draft resolutions or decisions ("L.\_/Rev.\_" documents), the previously issued draft resolution or decision must be used as the base text, with all revisions clearly indicated.

The submission of draft resolutions that do not comply with these guidelines will delay the processing of the texts concerned.

### **TIP: HOW TO TRACK CHANGES IN MICROSOFT WORD**

- Locate the previously issued resolution (A/RES), decision or, in the case of revised draft resolutions, the previously issued draft (L. document) on the Official Document System (ODS) at <https://documents.un.org>, download the Word version and save it as a new document.
- On the Review tab, click on the "Track Changes" icon  to turn on the Track Changes feature.
- Make changes to the document: any changes to the original text will now be indicated in the document.

Once the text has been agreed upon, i.e. after negotiations have been completed, open the text for e-Sponsorship in the e-deleGATE portal (see box below).

Delegations are requested to inform GAAB if:

- The delegation intends to introduce the draft resolution at a plenary meeting
- Changes to the draft resolution are expected – any oral changes made to a draft resolution must be certified with the author of such changes (signature from the proposing delegation)

#### **TIPS: CO-SPONSORING A DRAFT RESOLUTION**

- A Member State (but not jointly with others) can open a text for sponsorship on the e-deleGATE portal (delegate.un.int) by navigating to Plenary & Committees/GA Plenary/GA Plenary e-Sponsorship.
- In initiating e-Sponsorship, Member States can indicate which other Member States and/or Observer States can co-sponsor the proposal. Once e-Sponsorship is initiated, all registered users of eligible delegations will be informed.
- All delegations that have co-sponsored the proposal by the time it is submitted in accordance with the instructions above will be listed as co-sponsors on the “L.--” document. All delegations that co-sponsor subsequently (whether through e-Sponsorship or by indicating their intention to sponsor from their country’s desk when requested by the Secretary during the relevant plenary meeting) will be announced before adoption as “additional co-sponsors” and will be listed when an addendum to the “L.--” document is issued after the adoption.
- A draft resolution or decision will be open for co-sponsorship until just before its adoption.  
**Paper signature lists for sponsorship are no longer accepted.**

## **Annex: Editing of proposals at the United Nations**

### **1. Introduction: The editing process**

The Editing Section edits all United Nations documents, including draft resolutions and draft decisions, to ensure that the text is clear, accurate, consistent and grammatically correct, conforms to United Nations editorial standards and is translatable into the other five official languages.

#### **Editors will not make changes that alter the meaning of a resolution.**

- When a language issue touches on a substantive matter, the editor will consult with the submitting official.
- It is crucial for the editors to be informed when parts of a draft have been the subject of particularly intensive negotiations or are otherwise highly sensitive.

#### **Why is it important for resolutions to be edited?**

- They are important international instruments which constitute the official records of the Organization.
- The time pressure of negotiation and processing can lead to mistakes.
- Ambiguous language in the original can result in different interpretations in the other languages.
- Editing ensures that the principle of multilingualism is respected.

### **2. Draft resolutions**

All draft resolutions are submitted to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) for editing, translation, typing, proofreading and printing.

DGACM requires a minimum of three full business days before consideration of the item to process draft resolutions.

#### **Given the limited time available for processing, it is helpful if:**

- Contact information (telephone and email) for the main sponsor or facilitator is provided to ensure that editors can reach him/her to consult on the text;
- For draft resolutions based on a previous resolution, the adopted text (with the symbol A/RES/[session number]/[resolution number]) is downloaded from ODS and used as the basis for preparation of the new resolution.

### **3. Adopted resolutions**

#### **Final editing process**

- After adoption, the final editing process ensures concordance among all six language versions.

- Changes made by delegates at the time of adoption, if any, are incorporated into the text.
- Footnotes are checked for accuracy and additional footnotes inserted as needed.
- The finalized resolutions are issued with A/RES/xx/xxx symbols.

#### 4. Structure of resolutions

##### Paragraphs

Resolutions are essentially one long sentence with three elements:

- The name of the organ (the General Assembly)
- Preambular paragraphs
- Operative paragraphs

##### Subparagraphs

- Subparagraphs are identified by lower-case letters: (a), (b), (c) in English.
- The text of each subparagraph begins with a capital letter.
- Subparagraphs must have a similar, parallel structure (see examples below).

Example from resolution 66/167:

6. *Calls upon* all States:
- (a) To take effective measures to ensure...
  - (b) To foster religious freedom and pluralism...
  - (c) To encourage the representation and meaningful participation of...
  - (d) To make a strong effort to...

Example from resolution 66/94:

10. *Reaffirms* the importance ... of the work of the Commission ... and in this connection:
- (a) Welcomes the initiatives of the Commission ...
  - (b) Expresses its appreciation to the Commission ...
  - (c) Takes note with interest of the comprehensive approach ...
  - (d) Expresses its appreciation to the Governments ...
  - (e) Reiterates its appeal to ...

#### 5. Changes that editors make to resolutions

In keeping with standard editorial practice, editors:

- Check and correct titles and facts;
- Correct grammar and syntax;
- Correct, add or delete footnotes;
- Make minor adjustments to style to bring the text in line with United Nations editorial standards and to make the text translatable.

##### Titles of bodies, meetings, conventions, etc.

- Titles are checked and corrected as needed.
- In general, the full title is used at first mention in the preamble and at first mention in the operative part. Thereafter, a shortened form of the title may be used.

Example from resolution 67/184:

2. *Notes* the progress made thus far in the preparations for the [Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice](#);

3. *Decides* that the duration of the [Thirteenth Congress](#) should not exceed eight days;

### **Acronyms and abbreviations**

- With few exceptions, acronyms and abbreviations are not used in resolutions and will be spelled out in accordance with the practice governing titles outlined above.

### **Dates**

- Dates of meetings, adoption of conventions, declarations, etc., will be checked and corrected if necessary.

### **Countries**

- In general, the short form of the names of countries is used in United Nations documents, including in resolutions.
- For the official short names of countries, see [untermportal.un.org](http://untermportal.un.org).

### **Cities**

- Names of cities are followed by the name of the country, unless the city is the capital, in which case the country is omitted. The standard presentation in English is “Istanbul, Turkey”.

### **Punctuation**

- Editors will apply United Nations style in keeping with standard editorial practice.
- If a punctuation mark becomes a matter of political sensitivity, the editors must be informed.

### **Avoiding personification**

- A resolution or report does not decide/recommend/launch/convene/extend a mandate, etc.; it is the author of the report or the body adopting the resolution that takes the action.

Example:

“General Assembly resolution 65/14 requested the Secretary-General to report...”  
will be changed to read:

“The General Assembly, in its resolution 65/14, requested the Secretary-General to report...”

### **Notes/Takes note**

- “Notes” is used in the sense of “observes”.
- “Takes note” is used when the object is a report, statement or decision. A body should not “take note” of (or “welcome”) its own past decision, but rather “recall” it.

### **Reiterates**

- If the General Assembly “reiterates” something, it is repeating a statement made in a previous resolution. Therefore, if “reiterates” is used, some context must be given.

Example from resolution 67/246:

6. *Reiterates* that accountability is a central pillar of effective and efficient management that requires attention and strong commitment at the highest level of the Secretariat, as defined in paragraph 8 of its resolution 64/259 of 29 March 2010;

- If the Assembly does not wish to provide context, a more appropriate verb, such as “affirms”, “reaffirms”, “stresses” or “emphasizes”, should be used.

Example from resolution 67/246:

5. *Reaffirms* paragraph 37 of its resolution 62/87 and paragraph 2 of its resolution 64/228  
...

### Footnotes

- Source footnotes may be added or deleted during the editing process.

### Seasons of the year

- Since the seasons of the year vary in different hemispheres, editors will change a reference to “the summer of 2018”, for example, to “the third quarter of 2018”.

### Including, inter alia

- The use of “including” together with “inter alia” is redundant; editors will delete one or the other.

## 6. Editorial help desk and other resources

**Editors are available to offer assistance and advice.**

Please contact: [editingny@un.org](mailto:editingny@un.org)  
(212) 963-2528

### Other resources

- United Nations Editorial Manual Online ([dd.dgacm.org/editorialmanual/](http://dd.dgacm.org/editorialmanual/))
- Manuel de rédaction et d'édition de l'Organisation des Nations Unies ([dd.dgacm.org/ores/french/](http://dd.dgacm.org/ores/french/))
- UNTERM ([unterm.un.org](http://unterm.un.org))
- Official Document System (<https://documents.un.org>; also available at [ods.un.org](http://ods.un.org))