

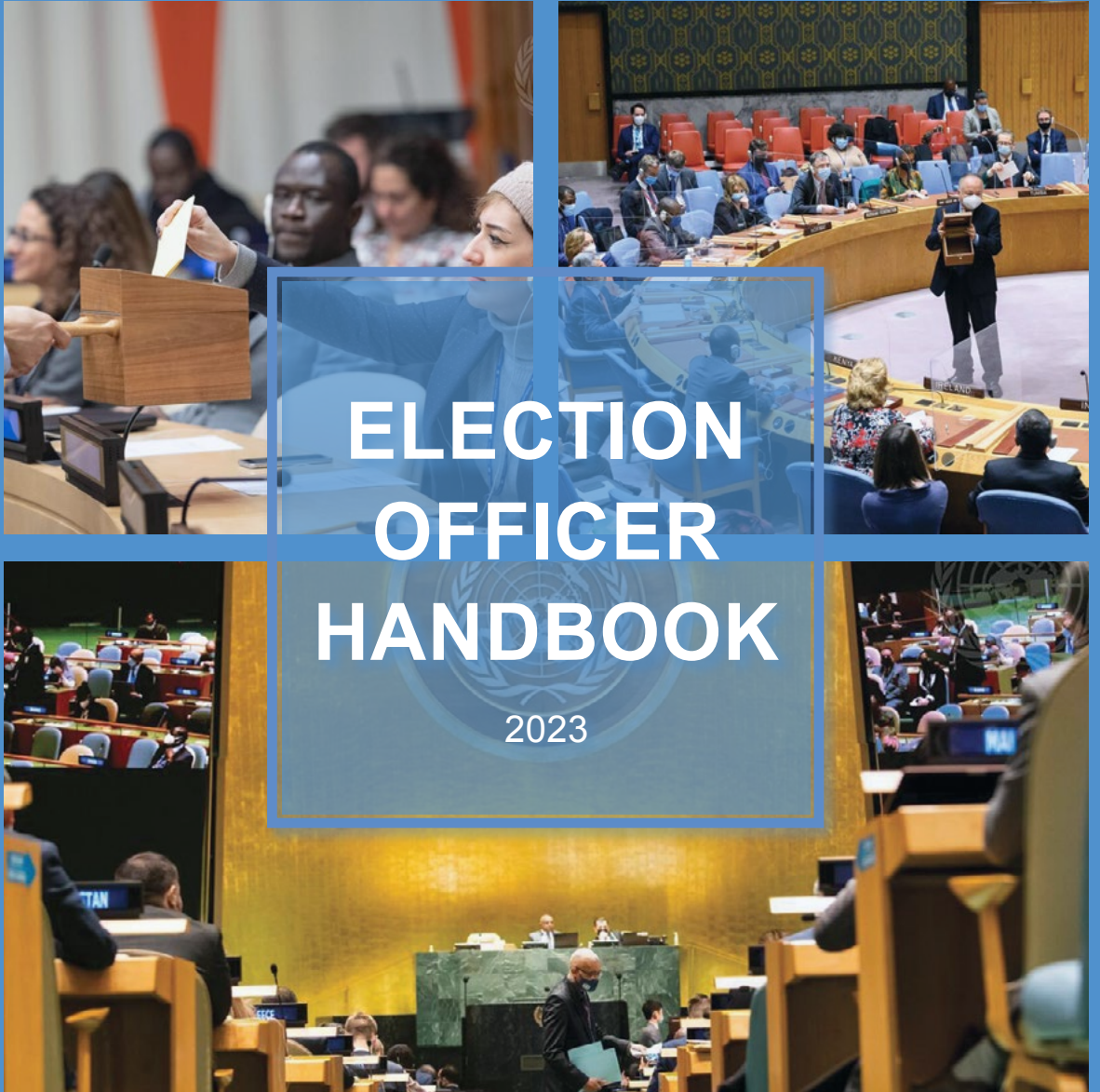


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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

KNOWLEDGE TO LEAD

New York Office



ELECTION OFFICER HANDBOOK

2023

From the Delegates
By the Delegates
To the Delegates





ASG Mr. Nikhil Seth,
Executive Director of UNITAR



Mr. Marco Suazo,
Head of UNITAR Office
in New York



UNITAR is established by the Secretary General Pursuant to its origination in a General Assembly resolution in 1934 (XVIII) of 11 December 1963, is dedicated to fulfilling its mandate on enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations in achieving the major objectives of the Organization, in particular the maintenance of peace and security and the promotion of economic and social development by implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as providing capacity building and training for diplomats around the world..

UNITAR seeks to enhance the effectiveness of the Policy makers in the United Nations, this publication is especially dedicated to the diplomatic community in particular the New York base diplomats – one of the largest communities in the world. To this end, the New York Office aims to equip Member States' diplomats with the capacity to navigate and contribute to the United Nations decision-making process more efficiently. In particular, it seeks to respond to the needs of delegates from developing and least developed countries, providing them with the knowledge and capabilities necessary to operate effectively within the United Nations system.

“Election Officer Handbook” was prepared by delegates themselves and UNITAR– NYO with secretariat official advise and practitioners. It is considered as an important tool for the delegates, supporting them in the electoral process within the United Nations in the General Assembly, ECOSOC, and the Security Council as well as the elections within those bodies in particular the UN Treaty Bodies under Human Rights. The handbook includes samples that make the process more visual and therefore easily understood for the new delegates joining the delegations. UNITAR and its staff is extremely proud to produce this tool for Member States which will be available in English in hard copies as well as in electronic format to be downloaded from UNITAR website. I take this opportunity to thank Larry Johnson, Kenji Nakano, Loraine Sievers, Stefano Sensi and Jochen De Vylder, as well as all the members of the UNITAR Team for their support which made the handbook possible.

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K N O W L E D G E T O L E A D

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UNITAR Election Officer Handbook 2023

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New York Office

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Requests to reproduce excerpts should be addressed to Marco A. Suazo, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, New York Office.

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THE ELECTION YEAR

AT A GLANCE

UN MEMBER STATES PARTICIPATE IN DOZENS OF ELECTIONS TAKING PLACE IN NEW YORK EACH YEAR. HERE'S A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF WHAT THE ELECTION YEAR LOOKS LIKE.

SEPTEMBER

New session of the UN General Assembly begins

OCTOBER

Human Rights Council (HRC)

NOVEMBER

GA subsidiary bodies:
Budgetary & administrative bodies
(5th Committee and the GA)

International Court of Justice (ICJ)
- every 3 years

International Law Commission (ILC)
- every 5 years

UN administrative tribunals (UNAT and UNDT)
- every 7 years

DECEMBER

GA subsidiary bodies:
PBC Organizational Committee (GA seats)

ECOSOC: outstanding vacancies

United Nations Commission on International
Trade Law (UNCITRAL)
- every 3 years

International Criminal Court (ICC)
- every 3 years

JANUARY–MARCH

No regular elections – campaigning for the
spring election season gears up.

APRIL–MAY

ECOSOC coordination & management
meeting: subsidiary body elections

JUNE

President and vice-presidents of the
General Assembly (PGA) and officers of
the Main Committees

ECOSOC

SECURITY COUNCIL

Treaty body elections: 2 year cycle
Year 1: CCPR, CEDAW, CRC, CRPD
Year 2: CED, CERD, CMW*

International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)
- every 3 years

Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS)
- every 5 years

JULY–AUGUST

No regular elections

*Treaty body abbreviations: CCPR - Human Rights Committee, CEDAW - Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, CRC - Committee on the Rights of Child, CRPD - Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, CED - Committee on Enforced Disappearances, CERD - Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, CMW - Committee on Migrant Workers.



UN PHOTO/LOEY FELIPE

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Introduction



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The purpose of the handbook is to help delegates understand the election process in the Intergovernmental Organs of the United Nations, principally in the General Assembly (GA) and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The elections are carried out in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure.

For elections to treaty bodies, including human right treaty bodies, the elections are conducted in the Conference or Meeting of States Parties to the treaty concerned and States that are parties to the Treaty participate in the elections in accordance with relevant provision in the Treaty as supplemented by the relevant rules of procedure. The exception is the Committee on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), whose members are elected by the Council, as the Committee was created by a resolution of the ECOSOC.

More information on elections serviced by the United Nations Secretariat is available to delegates in Candiweb in the e-delegates portal. Information contained therein includes an overview of the candidates, the terms of offices, relevant rules of procedure and other relevant information.

The Election Officer Handbook is divided into several chapters which cover the process and procedures of elections which take place at United Nations Headquarters. The handbook provides an outline on the important role played by the regional groups in the nomination process. Finally, the handbook clarifies the Election Officer's roles, responsibilities and information management while considering the technological development in adapting it to the strategies of building and managing campaigns and resource mobilization.

The Handbook does not provide information on each election conducted at United Nations Headquarters and does not include information on elections serviced by the Specialized Agencies and Related Organizations of the United Nations, for example with regard to the elections carried out in the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute.

A man in a grey suit and blue face mask is working at a desk. He is looking at a laptop screen. The desk is wooden and has a green folder on it. The background is blurred.

Chapter One:

Elections in the United Nations

UN PHOTO/MARK GARTEN

I. Understanding the Elections Process at the UN

The Charter of the United Nations mentions elections in Articles 18, paragraph 2 (voting in the General Assembly), 23, paragraphs 1 and 2 (election of the non-permanent members of members of the Security Council) and 61, paragraphs 1 to 3 (election of the members of ECOSOC)¹. The rules of procedure of the General Assembly and ECOSOC contain more specific rules on how elections shall be conducted and the circumstances in which there may not be a need to resort to secret ballots. Furthermore, over the years, resolutions and decisions have been adopted which outline for specific bodies, the numbers of seats available, the geographical distribution of the seats (including in some cases a decision on the number of seats available per regional group), the term of office, possibility of re-election and any staggering of the terms.²

¹ Article 18 of the Charter provides:

“1. Each member of the General Assembly shall have one vote.

2. Decisions of the General Assembly on important questions shall be made by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. These questions shall include: recommendations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security, the election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the election of the members of the Economic and Social Council, the election of member of Trusteeship Council in accordance with paragraph 1 (c) of Article 86, the admission of new Members to the United Nations, the suspension of the rights and privileges of membership, the expulsion of Members, questions relating to the operation of the trusteeship system, and budgetary question.

3. Decisions on other questions, including the determination of additional categories of the questions to be decided by a two-third majority, shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting.”

Article 23, paras. 1 and 2 of the Charter provides:

“1. The Security Council shall consist of fifteen Members of the United Nations. The Republic of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America shall be permanent members of the Security Council. The General Assembly shall elect ten other Members of the United Nations to be non-permanent members of the Security Council, due regard being specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution.

2. The non-permanent members of the Security Council shall be elected for a term of two years. In the first election of the non-permanent members after the increase of the membership of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen, two of the four additional members shall be chosen for a term of one year. A retiring member shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.”

Article 61, paras. 1-3 of the Charter provides:

“1. The Economic and Social Council shall consist of fifty-four Members of the United Nations elected by the General Assembly.

2. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 3, eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council shall be elected each year for a term of three years. A retiring member shall be eligible for immediate re-election.

3. At the first election after the increase in the membership of the Economic and Social Council from twenty-seven to fifty-four members, in addition to the members elected in place of the nine members whose term of office expires at the end of that year, twenty-seven additional members shall be elected. Of these twenty-seven additional members, the term of office of nine members so elected shall expire at the end of one year, and of nine other members at the end of two years, in accordance with arrangements made by the General Assembly.”

² For ECOSOC, this is contained in the Article 61, with the exception for the distribution of seat per region which was decided by General Assembly resolution 2847 (XXVI). In accordance with para. 4 of that resolution, the General Assembly decided that the members of ECOSOC shall be elected “according to the following pattern:

- (a) Fourteen members from African States;
- (b) Eleven members from Asian States;
- (c) Ten members from Latin American States;
- (d) Thirteen members from Western European and other States;
- (e) Six members from socialist States of Eastern Europe.”

There are many elections held every year, with a majority taking place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Intergovernmental organs of specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations may also hold elections which may be held in their Headquarters, in Geneva, Paris, London, Vienna amongst others. Some elections take place annually, while others take place less often, for example once in three years.

As the field of elections has expanded, so has the role of the Election Officer – particularly in recent years it has involved a growing number of campaigning tools. Navigating the process of elections, and its regional varieties, can be daunting. Some would argue you can only truly understand what an Election Officer does with time and practice. Time, however, is a limited resource when Committees are in session and campaigns are looming, and no one else in the office seems to know exactly what it is you do – Election Officers know this better than anyone. We rely on a variety of sources for information – and perhaps most of all, on a little help from our peers – to get by. This is why this handbook is made for Election Officers, by Election Officers, with a hope to help you a little along the way. This Chapter will introduce you to the process of elections at the UN at large, as well as its regional varieties.

II. Elections Procedures at a glance

There are six principal organs of the United Nations: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat. The General Assembly, the only body composed of all Members of the Organization, elects some members (the non-permanent members) of the Security Council, also elects all members of the Economic and Social Council, participates in the election of the Judges of the International Court of Justice (together with the Security Council) and appoints the Secretary-General upon recommendation of the Security Council. In turn, the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council elect or appoint members of their subsidiary and related bodies. In certain cases, multiple principal organs may be involved in an election. For example, the judges of the International Court of Justice are elected by both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Another example is the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, which includes, inter alia, members elected by the Security Council, seven members elected by ECOSOC, and seven members by the General Assembly.³ Certain subsidiary bodies elect or appoint members of other bodies.

³ General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005).

In principle, all elections are held by secret ballot. This is firmly anchored in the rules of procedure, which, for example for the General Assembly, provide that “[a]ll election shall be held by secret ballot”. Yet, Annex V to the same rules of procedure stipulates that “[t]he practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard and the same practice should apply to the election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.” Similar provisions and practices exist for other intergovernmental bodies.

While the modalities for each election are different, there are a number of parameters that can be kept in view when analyzing a specific election. These are as follows:

1. Membership: who are the members of the body: Member States, individuals, or a mix? What is the term of membership?
2. Presentation of candidatures: which entity can present the candidature: a Member State, a regional group, the Secretary-General?
3. Endorsement: are candidatures endorsed by the regional group?
4. Seats and eligibility: how many seats are available? Is there a regional distribution? Are members eligible for re-election? Are certain seats dedicated to certain categories of entities?
5. Decision-making: which decision-making rule applies: simple majority, two-thirds majority or absolute majority? In the case of elections in the General Assembly and its Main Committees, are the voting rights of any Member States suspended?



The crown jewel of elections; the exchange of letters from the Presidents of two principal organs, the General Assembly and the Security Council, towards the election of the Judges of the International Court of Justice

The rules of procedure for a specific election are the ones of the body in which the election is conducted. For example, for elections to the Economic and Social Council, the rules of procedure of the General Assembly are applied, whereas for elections of ECOSOC Bureau members, such as of the President or a Vice-President taking place in the Economic and Social Council, the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council apply.

The technical secretariat that can advise on procedural or logistical matters is the secretariat of the body in which the elections are conducted. For example, procedural advice on elections to the Human Rights Council can be obtained from the secretariat of the General Assembly, not from the secretariat of the Human Rights Council.

Electoral groups

UN bodies often have electoral groups (based on regions or on other criteria) for which a determined number of seats is allocated (refer to the Annex for a detailed background for some key elections held at United Nations Headquarters in New York). In most cases, available seats in a given body follow a set allocation according to the UN's five regional groups (African States, Asia-Pacific States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States, and Western European and other States), though there are exceptions. While any Member State fulfilling the candidacy criteria may present a candidature for a given vacancy, regional groups sometimes agree on informal, internal rotation schemes and present endorsed, uncontested candidatures for certain elections. If the seats are allocated to regions, those slates for which the number of seats available are greater than, or equal to, the number of candidates are referred to as "clean slates" for example, a vacancy exists for five seats to a regional group and there are five or less candidates from that regional group.

Voting in elections

Voting in elections is done via paper ballot (as opposed to voting on proposals which is usually done electronically or in some cases by a roll-call vote). The paper ballots contain the names of nominated candidates. When the rules of procedure and the modalities of an election allow, blank lines equal to the number of vacant seats are added, in keeping with General Assembly resolution 71/323. As indicated above, in certain elections, if there is a clean slate, it is possible to dispense with the secret ballot and elect candidates by acclamation (for example the election of the President of the General Assembly or the majority of clean slates of subsidiary and related bodies elected by ECOSOC).



UN PHOTO/AMANDA VOISARD

Ballot papers

If the seats for a particular election are allocated to regions or another category, then a separate ballot will be prepared for each region/category. Thus, for the election of the members of ECOSOC in the General Assembly, five ballot papers, one for each of the regional groups, stapled together are distributed to the representative seated behind the name plate of the Member State by conference officers. Each ballot will contain the names of those candidates communicated in advance to the Secretariat for that region. If the candidates are individuals (for example the President of the General Assembly), then the ballot will reflect the name of the candidate and the country of nationality.

Another example would be from ECOSOC, where for instance members are elected to the Executive Board of UN-Women from three different categories: from among regional group; from among top 10 voluntary core contributing countries; and from among top 10 voluntary core contributing countries not members of the Developing Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development. Should secret balloting be required for one or more of these categories, the ballot papers would need to be separated by respective categories, for which eligibility differs.

If no decision on allocation exists for an election, there will be a single ballot paper that will list the names of all candidates.

If a representative of a member arrives after the distribution of ballot papers, the representative may approach the podium for a ballot paper as long as the election is still in process. Similarly, should a representative need to receive a new ballot paper before the conclusion of the election process in case they made an error in marking up their vote, the representative may bring the used ballot to the Secretariat officials, in exchange for a new ballot. Once the election process has been declared closed by the presiding officer, no more ballots are accepted.

Required Majority

Three different kind of majority requirements for the candidate to be elected exist as outlined above and this is important. The first and most common kind is for a candidate to be elected by a “simple majority of those present and voting” which is often referred to as a “simple majority” requirement. A simple majority is the lowest number that is more than half the total of those “present and voting”. For example, if there are 193 delegations “present and voting”, the simple majority is 97. If 192, the simple majority is 97. If 191, the simple majority is 96. It is important when doing the calculation to remember that “present and voting” do not include those delegations that abstain in the voting by submitting a blank or empty ballot (where none of the candidates are ticked) or an invalid ballot (for example a ballot that contains votes for more candidates than the number of available seats).

The second kind is an absolute majority. The majority required is the majority of all members or of the total the membership, no matter whether all members are present and cast a vote or not. For example, if the membership in the body is 193 (General Assembly), the absolute majority is 97, whether there are 100, 150 or 193 members “present and voting”. If the membership is 15 (Security Council), the absolute majority is 8.

The third kind is a “two-thirds majority of those present and voting” often referred to as a “two-thirds” requirement. A two-thirds majority is two-thirds of delegations “present and voting” rounded up to the nearest integer. For example, if there are 193 delegations “present and voting”, the two-thirds majority is 129. If 192, the two-thirds majority is 128. If 191, the two-thirds majority is 128.

As was the case with a simple majority, in the case of a two-thirds majority, the total of members “present and voting” excludes abstentions and invalid ballots.

For example, if a simple majority is required for an election where 150 ballots were cast, with 3 invalid ballots and 5 abstentions, the total number of members present and voting will comprise 142 ($150 - 3 - 5 = 142$) and the required majority – 72 (or in the case of a two-thirds majority - the required majority is 95).

The entire voting process is supervised by tellers. Tellers are representatives of the members of the body in which the elections are taking place (e.g. in an election taking place in the General Assembly, any of the 193 Member States may put forward its representatives to act as tellers. In an election taking place in ECOSOC, only members of ECOSOC may put forward its representatives to act as tellers. Members that have put forward a candidate in an election do not participate as tellers for that election. Ballots are counted by tellers who are supported by the Secretariat.

III. Regional Processes for elections

The Member States of the United Nations is geopolitically divided into five regional groups for a number of reasons, including to ease elections processes. The five groups are: Group of African States (AG), Group of Asia-Pacific States (APG), Group of Eastern European States (EEG), Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), and Group of Western European and other States (WEOG).

Kiribati is not a member of any regional group.⁴ The United States of America is also not a member of any regional group but attends meetings of the Group of Western European and other States as an observer and is considered to be a member of that group for election's related purposes.⁵ Türkiye participates fully in both the Group of Western European and other States and the Group of Asia-Pacific States, but for electoral purposes is considered a member of the Group of Western European and other States only.⁶ Another exception is Japan, which is considered as a member of the Group of Asia-Pacific States for most elections, though a member of the Group of Western European and other States for elections to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund and Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/ United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services.

Regional Group	Number of Member States	Percentage of votes out of 193 Member States
Group of Latin American and Caribbean States	33	17%
Group of Asia-Pacific States <i>(including Kiribati for calculation purposes)</i>	54	28%
Group of African States	54	28%
Group of Eastern European States	23	12%
Group of Western European and other States <i>(including USA for calculation purposes)</i>	29	15%
Total	193	100%

⁴ <https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/regional-groups>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/regional-groups>

⁶ <https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/regional-groups>

Much of the work in the UN is organized according to the five regional groups. Their function is both geopolitical and practical, representing an attempt to distribute positions and roles in the UN with some geographical equity, and providing an administrable forum to discuss and coordinate election matters. They are non-binding, but group decisions and endorsements can be taken into account by members. Practice and scope vary somewhat between the groups.

Chairing and administrative responsibility of the regional groups rotates between group members on a monthly basis. The current chairs are listed at all times in the “General Info” section of the United Nations Journal. The Groups are organized as follows:

Group of African States (AG)

The Group of African States (also referred to as the African Group) is the largest of the five groups, with 54 member states and carrying 28% of all votes of UN Member states. The African Union meets in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to discuss the different candidatures. The African Group does not maintain a candidature chart, so information on candidatures is best found by reviewing the documentation on the African Candidatures endorsed by the African Group for vacancies in various United Nations bodies or organs for elections to be held in New York.

Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina, Faso, Burundi, Cabo, Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Sao Tome and Principe, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Group of Asia-Pacific States (APG)

The Group of Asia-Pacific States (also known as the Asia-Pacific Group or the Group Asian and Pacific Small Island States) is comprised of 53 members (with the exception of Türkiye for electoral purposes). The Chair of the group rotates by alphabetical order. Each month, a different Member State holds the role of Chair where they are responsible for disseminating information to the Group, conducting the monthly meeting and assembling the monthly group candidature chart. The Group can endorse candidatures 4-months before an election, excluding candidatures to the Security Council which can be endorsed one-year in advance.

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati**, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Türkiye*, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen

Group of Eastern European States (EEG)

The Eastern European group comprises 23 countries from Eastern, Central and Southern Europe. The group holds a monthly meeting, in which the Member States discuss electoral matters. The group has a chairmanship rotation which goes in alphabetical order. Each month, a different Member States holds the chairmanship and is responsible to disseminate information to the Group and is in charge of conducting the monthly meeting and assembling the monthly group candidature chart.

Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian, Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine

* Türkiye participates in both the Group of Asia-Pacific States and the Group of Western European and other States, but for election's purposes is considered a member of the Group of Western European and other States only.

** As of 2010, Kiribati is not a member of any regional group.

Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC)

The Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) comprises thirty-three (33) Member States from Central and South America. Its members compose 17% of all United Nations members.

The Group provides a forum for geopolitical discussions and coordination, in addition to candidature issues. Chairing the Group is rotated monthly, in alphabetical order.

Established practice within GRULAC has been that the Chair for that month circulates requests for endorsement among members of the group. Once an endorsement has been received, the UN Secretariat or relevant international body, conference or high-level meeting is formally notified. In most cases, the provision of endorsements is a conventional practice rather than a requirement, as group members sometimes opt to submit their candidatures directly to the UN Secretariat or relevant international body.

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)



UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE

Group of Western European and other States (WEOG)

The Group of Western European and Other States (also known as the Western European and Others Group) comprise 28 members and one observer, constituting 15% of the UN membership. The group stands out somewhat in that its membership is determined by geopolitical affiliation, and includes States that are geographically distant, but with historical links to Western Europe.

The group meets monthly to discuss electoral and procedural matters, and as a main rule, does not discuss matters of substance. For this reason, group meetings are usually very short, involving an update of the WEOG candidature chart, as well as questions of endorsement. The rotation of Chair is based on alphabetic order in French.

WEOG holds 5 seats on the UN Security Council: three permanent, and two non-permanent which are elected biannually. It holds a total of 13 seats on the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), where one-third is elected for a three-year term every year. It also holds a total of seven seats on the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), following the same electoral pattern as ECOSOC.

WEOG maintains an internal rotation for seats on ECOSOC, as well as for some funds and programmes - these seats are therefore endorsed prior to the election and are uncontested.

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye*, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America**

* Türkiye participates in both the Group of Asia-Pacific States and the Group of Western European and other States, but for election's purposes is considered a member of the Group of Western European and other States only.

** The United States of America is a member of the Group of Western European and other States for election's purposes but attends meetings of the Group as an observer.

IV. Elections in the General Assembly

Information with regard to upcoming elections can be found in a number of different places. A first point of reference is the annotated agenda, which is issued on 15 June of each year, under the A/XX/100 symbol, with XX representing the session. For the 77th session, the annotated agenda was issued as A/77/100. In the annotated agenda, under the elections and appointments items, a detailed write-up is provided of what is to be expected at the session in question. This includes references to the respective election modalities, including with regard to decision-making, the current membership of the body, the number of outgoing members and any regional distribution of seats.⁷

Another source of information is “Candiweb”, a module on the electronic platform entitled “e-deleGATE” maintained by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. In addition to the secretariat of the General Assembly, the technical secretariats of the Economic and Social Council, of the Fifth Committee and of the Meetings of States Parties provide up-to-date information on elections, appointments and candidatures. Access to the platform is restricted to delegates, which can contact the access administrator in their missions to obtain access to the platform.

Rules of procedure

Elections in the General Assembly are governed by rules 92, 93 and 94, which are replicated below for ease of reference. Rule 92 provides the general principle. Rules 93 and 94 outline the decision-making modalities for scenarios in which only one person or Member is to be elected (Rule 93) and in which two or more elective places are to be filled (Rule 94).

Rule 92

All elections shall be held by secret ballot.

Rule 93

When only one person or Member is to be elected and no candidate obtains in the first ballot the majority required, a second ballot shall be taken, which shall be restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes. If in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, and a majority is required, the President shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots. If a two-thirds majority is required, the balloting shall be

⁷ This document can be accessed at undocs.org/A/77/100.

continued until one candidate secures two thirds of the votes cast; provided that, after the third inconclusive ballot, votes may be cast for any eligible person or Member. If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots shall be restricted to the two candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes in the third of the unrestricted ballots, and the following three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted, and so on until a person or Member is elected. These provisions shall not prejudice the application of rules 143, 144, 146 and 148.

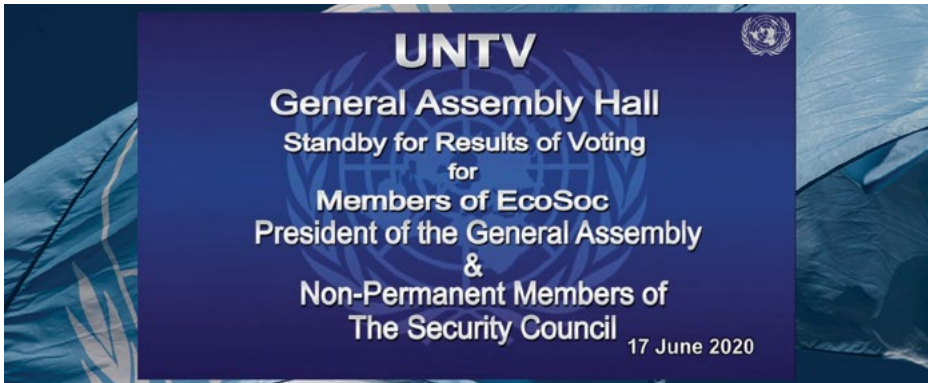
Rule 94

When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining in the first ballot the majority required shall be elected. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of persons or Members to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled; provided that, after the third inconclusive ballot, votes may be cast for any eligible person or Member. If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots shall be restricted to the candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes in the third of the unrestricted ballots, to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled, and the following three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted, and so on until all the places have been filled. These provisions shall not prejudice the application of rules 143, 144, 146 and 148.

Rules 93 and 94 outline the balloting pattern, which continues until all the places have been filled: ballot 1, ballots 2-4 (restricted), ballots 5-7 (unrestricted), ballots 8-10 (restricted), ballots 11-13 (unrestricted), etc. The difference between a restricted and an unrestricted ballot is that an unrestricted ballot provides for the possibility of casting a vote for any of the eligible candidates and in some elections, of write-in candidates, whereas for a restricted ballot voting is restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled. Thus, if there are four remaining candidates and one seat remains vacant, the restricted ballot will only contain the names of two candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot not all four.



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UN PHOTO/EVAN SCHNEIDER

In connection with those elections requiring a simple or two-thirds majority, rule 86 is also of relevance. Rule 86 provides that “the phrase [“]members present and voting[“] means members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members which abstain from voting are considered as not voting.”

Voting rights in the Assembly and its Main Committees are subject to Article 19 of the United Nations Charter, which provides that “[a] Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years. The General Assembly may, nevertheless, permit such a member to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member.” Ballots are therefore not handed out to those members that are subject to Article 19 and the Assembly has not established that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the member.⁸

⁸ For an updated list of countries subject to Article 19, please see here: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/art19.shtml>

Example

For a hypothetical election in the General Assembly with three elective places, seven candidates, no regional distribution and decision-making by simple majority, one would first have to determine the total number of ballots that would be handed out, which is the **total number of members (193)** minus any countries whose voting rights are suspended. For example, **one Member State does not have a vote. The total number of ballots to be handed out is 192.**

The Conference Officers would distribute the ballots to the delegates seated behind the nameplates at their national desks. Ballots would not be handed out to absent delegations. For the example, **zero delegations were absent.** The President of the General Assembly would then invite the Tellers to accompany the Conference Officers to collect the ballots. Ballots would be collected and the Tellers and Secretariat officials would depart to GA-200, the office behind the podium, to count the ballots. For the example, **all 192 ballots were returned.**

At this point, the Tellers would start counting the individual votes cast. For the example, say the voting distribution was as follows: **candidate A, 61 votes; candidate B, 66 votes; candidate C, 71 votes; candidate D, 76 votes; candidate E, 81 votes; candidate F, 96 votes; and candidate G, 97 votes.** There were no invalid ballots and no abstentions. **The total number of members present, and voting is therefore 192.** In this case, only a single candidate, candidate G would immediately be elected, as **only candidate G obtained the required simple majority of 97** of members present and voting (192). Had there been any invalid ballots or abstentions (blank ballots), the number of members present and voting would have been reduced accordingly.

At this point, the Assembly would proceed to a second round. In keeping with rule 94, the second round would be restricted to twice the places remaining to be filled. Since only two places remain to be filled, **four out of the five candidates, candidate C, candidate D, candidate E and candidate F would proceed to the second round.** In keeping with rule 94, this second round is the first restricted ballot. After collecting the ballot papers, **in the second round, 160 ballots were returned.** Say that the voting distribution was as follows: **candidate C, 69 votes; candidate D, 81 votes; candidate E, 82 votes; and candidate F, 87 votes.** There were 2 abstentions and no invalid ballots to show how the variable of abstentions would affect the calculations.

The total number of members present and voting is therefore 158. In this case, **candidate E and candidate F would be elected**, as they both obtained the required **simple majority of 80** and the greatest number of votes. Candidate D also obtained the required majority, but was not elected since candidate E and candidate F obtained greater numbers of votes.

Members 193	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Ballots 192	61	66	71	76	81	96	97	Round 1
	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Ballots 160			69	81	82	87		Round 2
			■	■	■	■		



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Information on a number of elections in the General Assembly is provided below.

Security Council

Total membership: 15, of which 10 are elected by the GA

Term of office: 2 years (rule 142)

Timing of election: June

Eligibility: retiring members are not eligible for immediate reelection (rule 144)

Endorsement: possible

Decision-making: two-thirds majority

The geographical distribution varies according to odd- and even-numbered years. Seat distribution in even-numbered years:

- African and Asia-Pacific States: two seats
- GRULAC: one seat
- WEOG: two seats

Seat distribution in odd-numbered years::

- African and Asia-Pacific States: three seats
- EEG: one seat
- GRULAC: one seat

Seats for African and Asia-Pacific States⁹

Officially AG and APG together have five elected seats on the Council, owing to a historical grouping of these two. The de facto division is two APG-seats (one elected each year) and three AG-seats (one is elected in even years, two in odd years). The two groups have also agreed (gentlemen agreement) to share a “**swing seat**” dedicated to an Arab country which alternates between the African and Asia-Pacific groups every two years.

⁹ Sources: Special Research Report No. 4: Security Council Elections 2011 : Research Report : Security Council Report, and unsc_elections_2019-1.pdf (securitycouncilreport.org).

Beginning in 1968, the Africa Group and the Asia Group (now the Asia-Pacific Group) in the United Nations implemented an informal arrangement to ensure that each year at least one member of the UN Arab Group would sit on the Security Council. This was with the intention that an Arab point of view would always be available within the Council each time a Middle East issue, or other matters of concern to the Arab world, were considered. It was decided that alternating every two years, the respective regional group would endorse one of its members from the Arab Group for an open seat. Because endorsement by UN regional groups is not codified, but rather is a matter left to the discretion of each group, this decision was never recorded as part of any official UN document. The agreement was immediately put into practice, with Algeria, from the Africa Group, serving on the Council for 1968-1969, followed by Syria, from the Asia Group (1970-1971), and then the Sudan (1972-1973), followed by Iraq (1974-1975), and has continued without interruption to the present.¹⁰

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Total membership: 54, of which 18 are elected each year (rule 145) Term of office: 3 years (rule 145)

Timing of election: June

Eligibility: retiring members are eligible for immediate reelection (rule 146)

Endorsement: possible

Decision-making: two-thirds majority

In June each year, the GA elects one third of ECOSOC's membership, for a three-year, renewable term starting 1 January the following year. A Member State needs a two-thirds majority to be elected.

Seat distribution:

- AG: 14 (five or four each year)
- APG: 11 (four or three each year)
- EEG: 6 (two each year)
- GRULAC: 10 (three or four each year)
- WEOG: 13 (four or five each year)

¹⁰ The Procedure of the UN Security Council book, by Ms. Loraine Sievers, <https://www.scprocedure.org/>

President of the General Assembly (PGA) and 21 Vice-Presidents

Seats: 1 President and 21 Vice-Presidents (including the five permanent members of the Security Council)

Term of office: 1 session

Timing of election: June

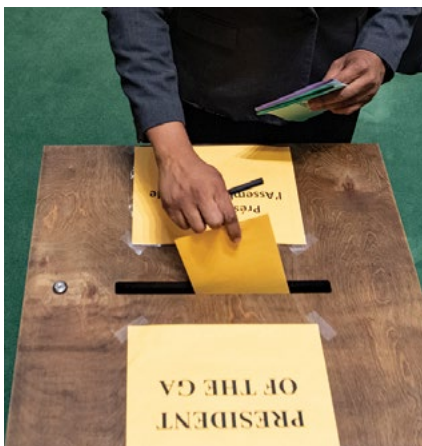
Endorsement: possible

Decision-making: simple majority

In June each year, the GA elects its President and Vice-Presidents for the coming GA session. These elections commonly happen via acclamation. **Candidates can be endorsed by their regional groups.** This is also frequently the case for the PGA, though there have been several examples of competitive elections, particularly in recent years. When that happens, the election is held with a simple majority requirement.

The role of PGA rotates among the five regional groups. In the election of Vice-Presidents, the distribution of 21 seats is as follows:

- 6 representatives from African States;
- 5 representatives from Asia-Pacific States;
- 1 representative from an Eastern European State;
- 3 representatives from Latin American and Caribbean States;
- 2 representatives from Western European or other States;
- 5 representatives from the permanent members of the Security Council.



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

In line with rule 30, the Vice-Presidents shall be elected after the election of the Chairs of the six Main Committees, in such a way as to ensure the representative character of the General Committee.



UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE

Human Rights Council

Membership: 47

Term of office: 3 years

Timing of election: October

Endorsement: possible

Eligibility: members serving a second consecutive term are not eligible for re-election

Decision-making: absolute majority

Around October each year, the GA elects one third of HRC's membership, for a three year, once renewable term starting 1 January the following year. A candidate needs absolute majority to be elected.

Seat distribution:

- AG: 13 (four or five each year)
- APG: 13 (four or five each year)
- EEG: 6 (two each year)
- GRULAC: 8 (three or two each year)
- WEOG: 7 (two or three each year)

SAMPLE RESULTS FORM**GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Seventy-First Session****ELECTION OF FOURTEEN MEMBERS OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL [114 (4)]****GROUP A - African States (4 seats)****RESULTS of the VOTE**

Number of ballot papers	193
Number of invalid ballots	0
Number of valid ballots	193
Abstentions	0
Number of Members present and voting	193
Required majority	97

**NUMBERS OF VOTES OBTAINED
BY EACH MEMBER STATE:**

TUNISIA	189
SOUTH AFRICA	178
RWANDA	176
EGYPT	173
MOROCCO	2
MAURITIUS	1
SENEGAL	1
SIERRA LEONE	1

International Court of Justice (ICJ)

Total membership: 15, of which 5 are elected every three years

Term of office: 9 years

Timing of election: November

Eligibility: persons nominated by the national groups in the Permanent Court of Arbitration

Decision-making: absolute majority of votes both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council

Elections to the International Court of Justice follow a complex set of modalities and are held every three years¹¹, the General Assembly, and the Security Council, voting independently but simultaneously, elect five judges to the ICJ for a nine-year renewable term starting in February the following year. A candidate needs absolute majority in both the General Assembly (97) and the Security Council (8) to be elected¹². Balloting continues until the five candidates have obtained an absolute majority of votes in both the General Assembly and the Security Council. In case more than five candidates receive an absolute majority on the same ballot, the practice of both organs was to have a new vote on **all** candidates. In case fewer than five candidates obtain the required votes, the next round of voting is held **for only the remaining vacant seat(s)**. Once five candidates receive the required majority, the President of the General Assembly writes to the President of the Security Council and vice-versa informing of the results. Should the names match, the candidates are elected. Should one or more names not match, both organs will proceed to a new “meeting” immediately following the announcement of the results to fill the remaining seats. This election process taking place in two organs at the same time, is unique to the ICJ, means that multiple rounds are fairly common.

Should one seat remain vacant and when a candidate continuing to receive a majority in the General Assembly is different from a candidate continuing to receive a majority in the Security Council, Article 12(1) of the ICJ Statute provides for the possibility of a “joint conference” to resolve the deadlock. This option has never been used but was considered in connection with the 2014 and 2017 elections. In the ensuing informal discussions, it was felt that the more equitable way forward would be to continue with balloting in both organs until the majority in one shifted.

¹¹ UN Charter: Article 2-13 Statute of International Court of Justice

¹² For more details on elections of members of the ICJ, see the Legal Opinion of 6 November 1984, which was published in the United Nations Judicial Yearbook of 1984, concerning the International Court of Justice Election Procedure to be followed in the Security Council and the General Assembly.



UN PHOTO/MARK GARTEN

Article 9 of the ICJ Statute provides that at every election, the electors shall bear in mind not only that the persons to be elected should individually possess the qualifications required, but also that in the body as a whole the representation of the main forms of civilization and of the principal legal systems of the world should be assured. Although there exists no geographical allocation of seats, there is a customary practice in place of respecting regional distribution, though there have been exceptions.

International Law Commission (ILC)

Total membership: 34 members

Term of office: 5 years

Timing of election: November

Endorsement: Possible

Eligibility: A retiring member of the ILC is eligible for immediate re-election

Decision-making: simple majority

Every five years, the General Assembly elects thirty-four (34) individuals as members to the International Law Commission (ILC). The General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of resolution 36/39 of 18 November 1981, decided that the 34 members of the International Law Commission shall be elected according to the following pattern: eight (8) nationals from African States; seven (7) nationals from Asia-Pacific States; three (3) nationals from Eastern European States; six (6) nationals from Latin American and Caribbean States; eight (8) nationals from Western European and other States; one (1) national from African States or Eastern European States in rotation; and one (1) national from Asia-Pacific States or Latin American and Caribbean States in rotation.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

Total membership: 70

Term of office: 3 years

Timing of election: June-July

Eligibility: A retiring member of UNCITRAL is eligible for immediate re-election

Decision-making: simple majority

Every three years, the General Assembly elects the members of UNCITRAL. In its resolution 76/109 of 9 December 2021, the General Assembly decided to increase the membership of the Commission to 70 States, with the distribution of seats as follows: sixteen (16) from the African States; sixteen (16) from the Asia-Pacific States; ten (10) from the Eastern European States; twelve (12) from the Latin American and Caribbean States; sixteen (16) from the Western European or other States.¹³



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The Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC)

The CPC consists of 34 Member States nominated by ECOSOC and elected by the General Assembly for a term of office of three years, on the basis of the following geographical distribution: (a) nine seats for African States; (b) seven seats for Asia-Pacific States; (c) four seats for Eastern European States; (d) seven seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; and (d) Seven seats for Western European and other States. Established by resolution 2008 (LX), the CPC is a subsidiary of both the General Assembly and ECOSOC.

¹³ United Nations Handbook 2022-23: Membership: Originally 29 states, membership increased to 36 in 1973, to 60 in 2003 (GA res. 57/20), and to 70 in 2021 (GA res. 76/109). GA res. 76/109 (2021) established that five of the 10 additional members would be elected during the General Assembly's 76th session and the remaining five during its 79th. Members take office at the beginning of the first day of the Commission's regular annual session immediately following their election (GA res. 31/99 (1976)). Terms, renewable, are usually six years, with the terms of half the members expiring every three years.

V. Elections in the Fifth Committee

The Fifth Committee makes recommendations to the General Assembly for the appointment or confirmation of appointment to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; the Committee on Contributions; the Investments Committee; the Board of Auditors; the International Civil Service Commission; the Independent Audit Advisory Committee; and the United Nations Staff Pension Committee.

It is the established practice of the Fifth Committee to set a deadline for receipt of nominations¹⁴ and to include only the names of nominated candidates in the ballot paper. It is also the established practice of the Fifth Committee to dispense with the secret ballot and recommend for appointment by acclamation those candidates where the number of candidates (from a regional Group, as applicable) corresponds to the number of seats to be filled (by that Group, as applicable).

For elections where one member is to be elected to a body, rule 132 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly applies, while for elections of two and more members, rule 94 is applicable. The required majority with respect any secret ballot conducted in the Fifth Committee is a simple majority.

With regard to elections in the Fifth Committee, there are General Assembly resolutions and established practices for the distribution of seats among regional groups. For the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the General Assembly, by its resolution 74/267, decided that the 21 membership seats should be distributed among regional groups as follows: African States, five; Asian and Pacific States, five; Eastern European States, three; Latin American and Caribbean States, four; and Western European and other States, four.

For the Committee on Contributions, the practice of the distribution of its 18 seats is as follows: African States, three; Asian and Pacific States, four; Eastern European States, three; Latin American and Caribbean States, three; and Western European and other States, five.

For the International Civil Service Commission, the practice of the distribution of its 15 seats is as follows: African States, four; Asian and Pacific States, three; Eastern European States, two; Latin American and Caribbean States, two; and Western European and other States, four.

For the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, the practice of the distribution of its five seats is as follows: Group of African States, one; Group of Asian and Pacific States, one; Group of Eastern European States, one; Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, one; and Group of Western European and other States, one.

Following the conclusion of the election process, either through balloting or by acclamation, the Fifth Committee submits to the General Assembly a draft decision containing the names of the persons recommended for appointment or confirmation of appointment.

¹⁴ The deadline for submission of candidatures and endorsements as well as the actual date for appointments and elections is determined at the Fifth Committee's first meeting of the session.

VI. Elections by ECOSOC to its subsidiary and related bodies

The Economic and Social Council oversees the work of more than thirty subsidiary and related organs, that broadly speaking consist of the functional commissions, regional commissions, standing committees, expert bodies composed of governmental experts or members serving in their national capacity, and ad hoc and related bodies. Brief background information comprising the establishment, terms of reference, membership and composition, term of office of members, reporting procedure, frequency of meetings and working methods of these bodies is available in document E/2019/INF/3 (Part I).

Additionally, specific information concerning the elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments to the ECOSOC subsidiary and related bodies may be found in the addendum to the annotated agenda of ECOSOC issued annually in the first quarter of the year, under the E/((year of the session)/100/Add.1 symbol. A Note by the Secretary-General is prepared, pursuant to a decision of ECOSOC¹⁵ with information on forthcoming vacancies in the functional commissions to be filled by the Vacancy and are issued as E/(year of the session)/9, which are complemented by numerous addenda, containing Notes by the Secretary-General on the election to other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC. In addition, a regularly updated list of candidates for regular and outstanding vacancies on for ECOSOC subsidiary and related bodies is available on “Candiweb”.

Following each session, the Council submits an annual report to the General Assembly, which contains an annex III providing an overview of the results of elections held during the session, comprising an overview also of the current and forthcoming membership of ECOSOC subsidiary and related bodies.

Rules and Procedures

Elections in ECOSOC are governed by rules 68, 69 and 70 which are replicated below for ease of reference. Rule 68 provides the general principle. Rules 69 and 70 outline the modalities for when one elective place need to be filled (Rule 69) and in which two or more elective places are to be filled (Rule 70). The required majority with elections held in ECOSOC is a simple majority (rule 60).. In the case of ECOSOC, rule 68 specifically provides that in the absence of any objection, the Council may elect an “agreed candidate” or a clean slate without a secret ballot.

¹⁵Section V of ECOSOC resolution 557 C (XVIII), as amended by the Council its decision of 19 December 1968.

Rule 68

All elections shall be held by secret ballot, unless, in the absence of any objection, the Council decides to proceed without taking a ballot on an agreed candidate or slate. When candidates are to be nominated, each nomination shall be made only by one representative, after which the Council shall immediately proceed to the election.

Rule 69

1. If, when only one elective place is to be filled, no candidate obtains in the first ballot the majority required, a second ballot shall be taken, confined to the two candidates having obtained the largest number of votes. If in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the President shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.
2. In the case of a tie in the first ballot among the candidates obtaining the second largest number of votes, a special ballot shall be held among such candidates for the purpose of reducing their number to two; similarly, in the case of a tie among three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes, a special ballot shall be held. If a tie again results in the special ballot, the President shall eliminate one candidate by drawing lots, and thereafter another ballot shall be taken among all the remaining candidates. The procedure prescribed by these rules shall, if necessary, be repeated until one candidate is duly elected.

Rule 70

1. When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates, in a number not exceeding the number of such places, obtaining in the first ballot the majority required and the largest number of votes shall be elected.
2. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of places to be filled, additional ballots shall be held to fill the remaining places, provided that if only one place remains to be filled the procedures in rule 69 shall be applied. The ballot shall be restricted to the unsuccessful candidates having obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, but not exceeding twice the number of places remaining to be filled. However, in the case of a tie between a greater number of unsuccessful candidates, a special ballot shall be held for the purpose of reducing the number of candidates to the required number; if a tie again results among more than the required number of candidates, the President shall reduce their number to that required by drawing lots.
3. If such a restricted ballot (not counting a special ballot held under the conditions specified in the last sentence of paragraph 2) is inconclusive, the President shall decide among the remaining candidates by drawing lots.



UN PHOTO/MANUEL ELÍAS

SAMPLE RESULTS SHEET

ELECTION RESULTS – 13 April (10th plenary meeting)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ELECTION OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS FROM AMONG THE AFRICAN STATES

The results of the secret ballot are as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	_____ 54 _____
Number of invalid ballots:	_____ 0 _____
Number of valid ballots:	_____ 54 _____
Abstentions:	_____ 0 _____
Number of Members present and voting:	_____ 54 _____
Majority required	_____ 28 _____

Number of individual votes obtained

Name	Number of votes
Peters Sunday Omologbe Emuze (Nigeria)	39
Asraf Ally Caunhye (Mauritius)	25
Djam Doudou Daouda (Cameroon)	25
Thokozani Kaime (Malawi)	17

SAMPLE RESULTS SHEET

*Results Form and Declaration of Results
55th Meeting of States Parties to the
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*

Election of new members of the Human Rights Committee

Results of election (First round)

The results of the first round of voting are as follows:

Number of Ballot Papers Distributed:	165
Number of Invalid Ballots:	1
Number of Valid Ballot Papers:	164
Abstentions:	0
Number of Representatives voting:	164
Required majority (Absolute majority of those present and voting)	83

Number of votes obtained:		
<i>Name of Candidate</i>	<i>Nominated by:</i>	<i>Votes received:</i>
Mr. Jose Manuel Sanches Polo	Portugal	101
Ms. Eva Brenda Kebrls	Latvia	98
Ms. Tamila maria Abello Rocheli	Paraguay	97
Ms. Marcia V. J. Kras	Canada	93
Mr. Ahmed Amin Farhulla	Egypt	92
Ms. Anja Seibert-Pohr	Germany	92
Mr. Yavad Shany	Israel	83
Mr. Sergiy Kylybya	Ukraine	73
Mr. Christof Bleyne	South Africa	68
Mr. Pabblo Cesar Salvichi	Argentina	65
Mr. Keis Bamarian	Mauritius	63

President and the Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC

The ECOSOC Presidency rotates among the regional groups following the established pattern: Group of African States, Group of Asia-Pacific States, Group of Eastern European States, Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, and Group of Western European and other States.¹⁶ Following the election of the President, the four Vice-Presidents are elected from the other regional groups.

As outlined in rules 18 and 19 of the rules of procedure of ECOSOC, the President of the Council and the four Vice-Presidents constitute the Bureau of the Council and are elected from amongst representatives of the 54 ECOSOC members. Bureau members are elected at the beginning of the session of the Council (in late July of each year) and hold office until their successors are elected. Bureau members are eligible for re-election.

ECOSOC subsidiary and related bodies

Elections to ECOSOC subsidiary bodies usually take place in April and December. Each ECOSOC member has one vote. Candidatures for most subsidiary bodies may be presented by any Member State.

The Council conducts elections by acclamation, unless the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies or an ECOSOC member requests secret balloting. In such cases, the Council proceeds to conduct the elections by secret ballot. The ballot will be held only with respect to those regional states that are contested or for which a secret ballot has been requested (i.e. if regional groups A, B, D and E are all clean slates and if no request for a secret ballot has been requested, the Council will proceed to elect them by acclamation. A secret ballot will be held only for the regional group C in this scenario either because it is contested or a request for a secret ballot has been made).

As mentioned above, information about the subsidiary and related bodies of ECOSOC, including the composition and terms of office of members, is contained in document E/2019/INF/3 (Part I). For ease of reference, some details relevant to the elections, nominations, confirmations and appointment to ECOSOC subsidiary and related bodies for which the Council conducts elections are provided below.

¹⁶ Rule 18 of ECOSOC rules of procedure

Functional commissions

The members of the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development are elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution according to a specified pattern.

The 24 members of the **Statistical Commission** are elected according to the following pattern: (a) Five members from African States; (b) Four members from Asia-Pacific States; (c) Four members from Latin American and Caribbean States; (d) Seven members from Western European and other States; (e) Four members from Eastern European States. The term of office of the members comprises four years.

The **Commission on Population and Development** consists of 47 members elected according to the following pattern: (a) Twelve members from African States; (b) Eleven members from Asia-Pacific States; (c) Five members from Eastern European States; (d) Nine members from Latin American and Caribbean States; (e) Ten members from Western European and other States. The term of office of members is for four regular sessions of the Commission and begins immediately after the conclusion of the Commission's regular session held after 1 January, following their election by the Council, and end at the conclusion of the regular session held after 1 January, following the election of the States that are to succeed them as members.

The 46 members of the **Commission for Social Development** are elected according to the following pattern: (a) Twelve members from African States; (b) Ten members from Asia-Pacific States; (c) Nine members from Latin American and Caribbean States; (d) Five members from Eastern European States; (e) Ten members from Western European and other States. The term of office of members is for four regular sessions of the Commission and begins immediately after the conclusion of the Commission's regular session held after 1 January, following their election by the Council, and end at the conclusion of the regular session held after 1 January, following the election of the States that are to succeed them as members.

The **Commission on the Status of Women** consists of 45 members elected according to the following pattern: (a) Thirteen members from African States; (b) Eleven members from Asia-Pacific States; (c) Nine members from Latin American and Caribbean States; (d) Eight members from Western European and other States; (e) Four members from Eastern European States. The term of office of members is for four regular sessions of the Commission and begins immediately after the conclusion of the Commission's regular session held after 1 January, following their election by the Council, and end at the conclusion of the regular session held after 1 January, following the election of the States that are to succeed them as members.

The 53 members of the **Commission on Narcotic Drugs** are elected in line with the following distribution of seats among the regional groups: (a) Eleven for African States; (b) Eleven for Asia-Pacific States; (c) Ten for Latin American and Caribbean States; (d) Six for Eastern European States; (e) Fourteen for Western European and other States; (f) One seat to rotate between the Asia-Pacific States and the Latin American and Caribbean States every four years. Members are elected for a term of office of four years, from among the States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies and the Parties to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, with due regard to the adequate representation of countries that are important producers of opium or coca leaves, of countries that are important in the field of the manufacture of narcotic drugs, and of countries in which drug addiction or the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs constitutes an important problem and taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

The **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice** has 40 members according to the following distribution of seats: (a) Twelve for African States; (b) Nine for Asia-Pacific States; (c) Four for Eastern European States; (d) Eight for Latin American and Caribbean States; (e) Seven for Western European and other States. The term of office of members is three years.

The **Commission on Science and Technology for Development** consist of 43 members that are elected on the basis of the following geographical distribution: (a) Eleven members from African States; (b) Nine members from Asia-Pacific States; (c) Eight members from Latin American and Caribbean States; (d) Five members from Eastern European States; (e) Ten members from Western European and other States. The term of office of members comprises four years.

Other bodies

The **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** comprises 18 experts, serving in their personal capacity, with 15 seats equally distributed among the five regional groups, while the additional 3 seats are allocated in accordance with the increase in the total number of States parties per regional group. The members of the Committee are elected by the Council from a list of persons nominated by States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and serve for a term of office of four years.

The **Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations** has 19 members, which are elected for a term of office of four years, on the basis of the following geographical distribution: (a) five members from African States; (b) four members from Asia-Pacific States; (c) two members from Eastern European States; (d) four members from Latin American and Caribbean States; and (e) four members from Western European and other States.

The **Permanent Forum on Indigenous** is composed of 16 members, of whom (a) eight members are nominated by Governments and elected by the Council, as follows, one seat allocated to each regional group, and an additional three seats rotating, on a recurring basis, among the five regional groups in accordance with an agreed pattern; and (b) eight members appointed by the President of the Council following formal consultations with the Bureau and regional groups through their coordinators, on the basis of broad consultations with indigenous organizations. All members serve in their personal capacity as independent experts for a term of office of three years.

The **Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting** is composed of 34 members elected by the Council on the following basis: (a) nine members from African States; (b) seven members from Asia-Pacific States; (c) three members from Eastern European States; (d) six members from Latin American and Caribbean States; and (e) nine members from Western European and other States. Following their election to a three-year term, each State appoints an expert to the Working Group with appropriate experience in the field of accounting and reporting.

Related bodies

The **International Narcotics Control Board** consists of 13 members elected by the Council as follows: (a) three members with medical, pharmacological or pharmaceutical experience from a list of at least five persons nominated by the World Health Organization; and (b) ten members from a list of persons nominated by the Members of the United Nations and by Parties to the 1961 Single Convention that are not Members of the United Nations. The term of office of members is five years, ending on the eve of the first meeting of the Board that his or her successor is entitled to attend.

The **Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS** is composed of 22 Member States that are elected by the Council according to the following regional distribution: (a) five seats for African States; (b) five seats for Asia-Pacific States; (c) two seats for Eastern European States; (d) three seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; and (e) seven seats for Western European and other States. Member States serve for a term of office of three years.

The **Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund** is made up of 36 Member States, elected by the Council according to the following regional distribution: (a) eight seats for African States; (b) seven seats for Asia-Pacific States; (c) four seats for Eastern European States; (d) five seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; and (e) twelve seats for Western European and other States. Member States serve for a term of office of three years.

The **Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services** is composed of 36 Member States, elected by the Council to the following regional distribution: (a) eight seats for African States; (b) seven seats for Asia-Pacific States; (c) four seats for Eastern European States; (d) five seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; and (e) twelve seats for Western European and other States. Member States serve for a term of office of three years.

The **Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women** consists of 41 Member States, 35 of which are elected by the Council according to the following regional distribution: (a) ten seats for African States; (b) ten seats for Asia-Pacific States; (c) four seats for Eastern European States; (d) six seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; and (e) five seats for Western European and other States. An additional six seats are allocated to contributing countries and distributed as follows: (a) four seats from among the ten largest providers of voluntary core contributions to the Entity; and (b) two seats from among the top ten developing countries providers not members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which provide voluntary core contributions to the Entity. Member States can be selected from only one category at any one time and serve for a term of office of three years.

The **Executive Board of the World Food Programme** is composed of 36 Member States, elected from among the States members of the United Nations and the States members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO each elect 18 members of the Executive Board, according to the following pattern, which loosely corresponds to the United Nations regional groups: four seats for 'List A'; four seats for 'List B'; two seats for 'list C'; 6 seats for 'List D'; and two seats for 'List E'. The most recent overview of the membership of the respective lists is contained in document annex III of document E/2022/9/Add.12.

The **Committee for the United Nations Population Award** is composed of 10 Member States elected by the Council in accordance with the following regional distribution: (a) three seats for African States; (b) two seats for Asia-Pacific States; (c) one seat for Eastern European States; (d) three seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; and (e) one seat for Western European and other States. Member States serve for a term of office of three years.

VII. Elections in the Treaty Bodies

The Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The Meeting of States Parties (Meeting) to UNCLOS conducts a number of elections as outlined below. The holding of the two UNCLOS elects members of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), as outlined below. Prior to proceeding with the elections, the Meeting considers the report of its Credentials Committee, and ballot papers are distributed only to States Parties with credentials that have been approved by the Meeting. In accordance with established practice, unless otherwise decided, the elections are held by secret ballot.

The elections are governed by the relevant articles of the Convention¹⁷ and its annexes and the rules of procedure of the Meeting.¹⁸ A Note by the Registrar of ITLOS or a Note by the Secretary-General of the United Nations is issued as a document of the Meeting (SPLOS/meeting session number/)/XX) with information on the procedures applicable to elections of the members of ITLOS or CLCS, respectively. Separate documents that are issued include the list of candidates nominated by States Parties for the elections and the statements of qualification of the candidates applicable procedures.

The quorum for the meeting during which elections are held is two-thirds of the State Parties (article 4, para. 1, of the Statute;¹⁹ article 2, para. 3, of annex II to UNCLOS). The required majority to be elected is outlined under each of the sections below.

The nineteenth Meeting of States Parties approved the following Arrangement for the allocation of seats on the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in 2009²⁰: (a) Five members shall be from the Group of African States; (b) Five members shall be from the Group of Asian States; (c) Three members shall be from the Group of Eastern European States; (d) Four members shall be from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States; (e) Three members shall be from the Group of Western European and other States; and (f) The remaining one member shall be elected from among the Group of African States, the Group of Asian States and the Group of Western European and other States. These arrangements do not prejudice or affect future arrangements for elections.

¹⁷ Annex II for elections of members of the CLCS; Annex VI for elections of members of ITLOS.

¹⁸ SPLOS/2/Rev.5. SPLOS/2/Rev.4

¹⁹ Annex VI to UNCLOS.

²⁰ SPLOS/201.

International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)

ITLOS is composed of “21 independent members, elected from among persons enjoying the highest reputation for fairness and integrity and of recognized competence in the field of the law of the sea” (article 2, para. 1, of the Statute). Every three years, States Parties elect seven members of ITLOS (article 5, para. 1, of the Statute).

With regard to membership, article 3 of the Statute²¹ provides that “[n]o two members of the Tribunal may be nationals of the same State. A person who for the purposes of membership in the Tribunal could be regarded as a national of more than one State shall be deemed to be a national of the one in which he ordinarily exercises civil and political rights.” The Statute further provides that: “[t]here shall be no fewer than three members from each geographical group as established by the General Assembly of the United Nations.”

With respect to the “remaining seat”, a two-step approach has been adopted (see below under CLCS). Articles 4 and 5 of the Statute deal with nominations and elections, and the term of office, which is nine years. Members of ITLOS may be, and they are eligible for re-election.

Following the practice established in 2011, at the twenty-first Meeting of the States Parties,²² every nine years the election follows a two-step approach, as applicable. In the first part of the election, six members of ITLOS are elected on the basis of the regional allocation of seats in points (a) to (e) of the above-mentioned Arrangement for the allocation of seats. The second part of the election is for the “remaining seat”, limiting the election to those candidates from the Groups, as applicable, of African States, of Asia Pacific States and of Western European and other States that were not elected in the first part. This approach does not apply to elections that do not include the “remaining seat”.

The nominees who obtain the largest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of the States Parties present and voting, provided that such majority includes a majority of the States Parties, are elected (Article 4, para. 4 of the Statute).

²¹ Annex VI of UNCLOS

²² SPLOS/231, paras. 62-63.

Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS)

The CLCS consists of 21 members who “shall be experts in the field of geology, geophysics or hydrography” (article 2, para. 1, of annex II to UNCLOS).

With regard to membership, article 2, para. 3, of annex II to UNCLOS provides that “[n]ot less than three members shall be elected from each geographical region”.²³ Every five years States Parties elect all 21 members.

Article 2 of annex II to UNCLOS deals with nominations, elections and the term of office, which is five years. Members of the CLCS may be re-elected.

Following the practice established in 2012, at the twenty-second Meeting of States Parties,²⁴ the election follows a two-step approach, as applicable. In the first part of the election, 20 members of CLCS are elected on the basis of the regional allocation of seats in points (a) to (e) of the above-mentioned Arrangement for the allocation of seats. The second part of the election is for the “remaining seat”, limiting the election to those candidates from the Groups, as applicable, of African States, of Asia Pacific States and of Western European and other States that were not elected in the first part.

The term of Office is five years and the members are eligible for re-election. Elections are conducted every five years. candidates who obtain the largest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting are elected (article 2, para. 3 of, annex II to UNCLOS).of the Convention)

VIII. Human Rights Treaty Bodies

There are a total of ten human rights Treaty Bodies. Treaty bodies consist of independent experts nominated by States parties and elected at a meeting of States parties (with the exception of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, whose members are elected by the Economic and Social Council upon nominations by States parties to the ICESCR).²⁵ The elections are conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the treaty concerned and the applicable rules of procedure.

The rules of procedure of all meetings of States parties convened to elect members of human rights treaty bodies require delegations to submit credentials to the Secretary-General prior to a meeting. The **Credentials** shall be issued by the Foreign Affairs Minister or Head of State/Government. Meetings have

²³ Article 2, para. 1, annex II to UNCLOS.

²⁴ SPLOS/251, paras. 86-87.

²⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/Pages/ElectionsFAQ.aspx>

routinely agreed to allow delegates from States parties who have not yet submitted their original credentials to vote on the basis of provisional credentials in accordance with the rules of procedure.

Below is a chart of the treaty body elections:

<i>Treaty Body²⁶</i>	<i>Limit on terms of membership?</i>	<i>Number of Independent Experts on the Committee</i>	<i>Term Length</i>
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	No	18 independent experts	4 years
Committee on Migrant Workers	No	14 independent experts	4 years
Committee Against Torture	No	10 independent experts	4 years
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	No	18 independent experts	4 years
Human Rights Committee	No	18 independent experts	4 years
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women	No	23 independent experts	4 years
Committee on the Rights of the Child	No	18 independent experts	4 years
Committee on Enforced Disappearances	Yes	10 independent experts	4 years
Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Yes	18 independent experts	4 years
Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture	Yes	25 independent experts	4 years

The treaties set out various criteria to guide States parties in the nomination and election of treaty body members.

What are the requirements to be elected to a treaty body? ²⁷

- To be a national of a State party to the human rights treaty in question.
- To be a person of high moral standing and recognized to have competence in the relevant field of human rights.

Consideration should also be given to equitable geographic representation²⁸, appropriate representation of different forms of civilization and the principal legal systems, balanced gender representation and the participation of experts with disabilities (see General Assembly resolution 68/268, OP13).²⁹

²⁶ The elections of members of the Committee Against Torture and the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture are held in Geneva.

²⁷ Please refer to specific language contained in the respective human rights treaties (or ECOSOC resolution for CESCR).

²⁸ The principle of equitable geographical representation remains a crucial feature for elections at the UN. The most recent Report of the Secretary General on its promotion for human rights treaty bodies is annexed for further information.

²⁹ OHCHR (2015), Handbook for Human Rights Treaty Body Members, retrieved from: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HR_PUB_15_2_TB%20Handbook_EN.pdf.

How are elections conducted?³⁰

Elections of treaty body members take place during Meetings of States parties. Two thirds of the States parties constitute a quorum, and experts are elected by secret ballot. The persons elected to the various committees are those nominees who obtained the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States parties present and voting.

Although there is a principle of geographical representation, there is no set allocation or distribution of seats amongst the regional groups and accordingly, there is a single ballot paper with the names of all candidates and their country of nationality.

This procedure is common to all treaty bodies with the exception of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights whose members are elected by the Economic and Social Council in line with the rules of procedure of ECOSOC. In the case of the Committee on Economic and Social and Cultural Rights, ECOSOC has decided on an allocation to each region in accordance with ECOSOC resolution 1985/17, as follows and in light of currently with 171 States parties Parties to the International Covenant on Economic, and Social and Cultural Rights³¹:

<i>Regional group</i>	<i>States parties as at 18 November 2021</i>	<i>Seats allocated</i>
African States	50	4
Asia Pacific States	41	4
Eastern European States	23	3
Latin American and Caribbean States	30	4
Western European and other States	27	3
Total	171	18

Accordingly, the number of vacancies in each geographical region to be filled by the Council in 2022 is as follows:

<i>Regional group</i>	<i>Number of vacancies</i>
African States	2
Asia Pacific States	2
Eastern European States	1
Latin American and Caribbean States	3
Western European and other States	1
Total	9

Procedures vary with regard to the number of candidates a State party can nominate and on the question of re-election.

³⁰ OHCHR (2021), Frequently Asked Questions, retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/Pages/ElectionsFAQ.aspx>.

³¹ As of 25 July 2022.

Chapter Two:

Roles and Responsibilities of the Election Officer



UN PHOTO/MARK GARTEN

I. Relationship Building

To be a successful Election Officer, it is critical that you maintain a network with other election Officers. This can be achieved by attending receptions and reaching out for one-on-one bilateral meetings.

It is recommended to work on building your network before you run your campaign, so you have time to foster good contacts and positive relationships with your election officer colleagues.

Since elections take place via a secret ballot, trust is very important in the relationships you build with other Election Officers and colleagues from Missions.

II. Information management

A key to managing a good campaign is to always be “on top” of your information. Information in the election world could be divided into 2 categories:

A. Information on your campaign

This information would include the more obvious parts such as number of supports you have received, number of “no”s you have received and so on, but it also includes knowing the information relevant to your campaign - How many seats, who are the other candidates, which countries are eligible to vote. In addition, this will help you present your candidature better to other colleagues and to your counterparts.

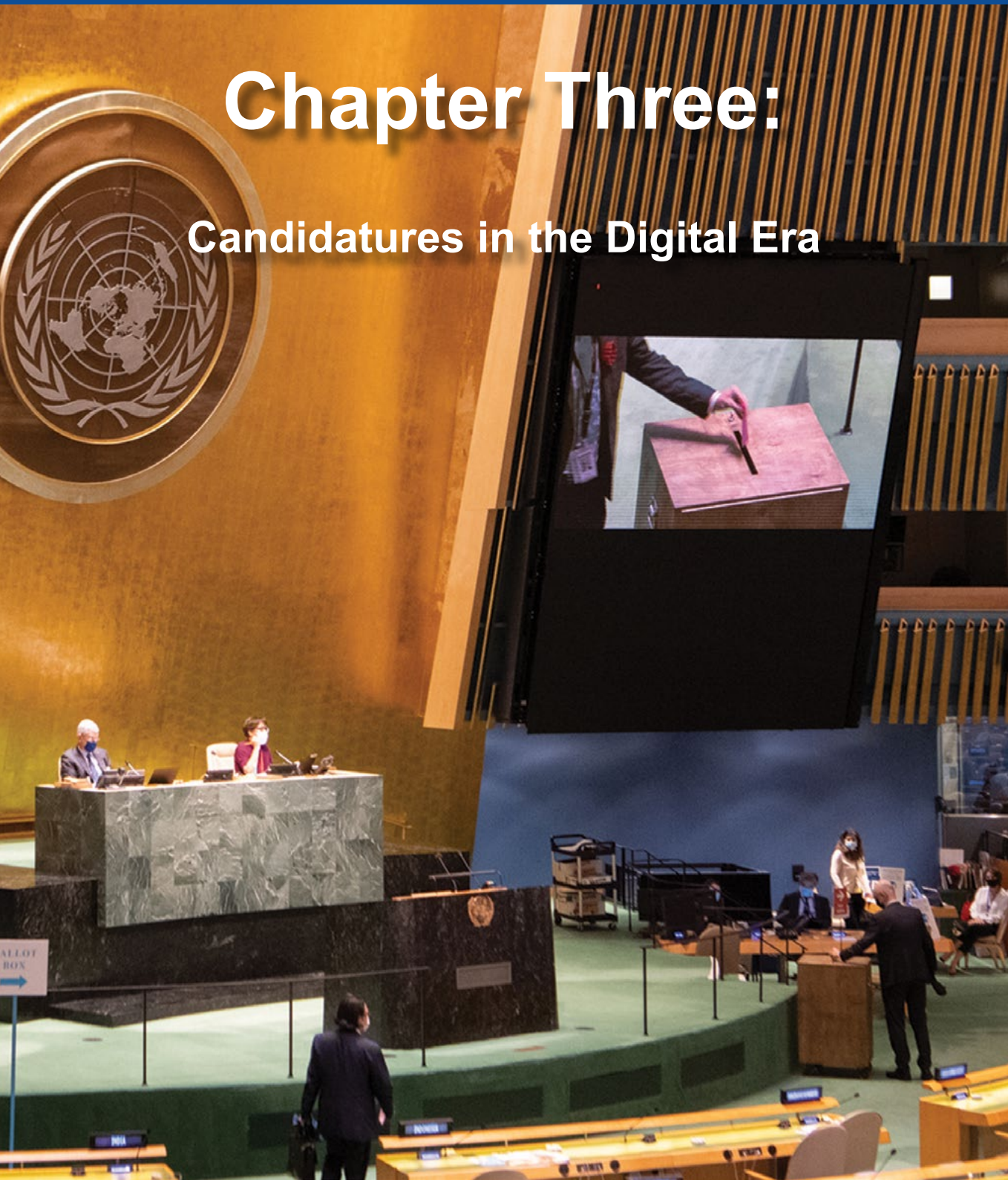
B. Information on other candidatures

This part relates to the different elections that are happening in proximity to your own. While not actively campaigning, election officers’ main responsibilities is to address requests to meet candidates, to inform or recommend to their capitals or counterparts regarding the election, and finally to vote in those elections. It is important therefore, to always know which elections are being held and when, how many seats and candidates they have, and of course, where those will be held. The Annex at the end of this guide and the timeline chart at the start of this handbook, will assist you in tracking all the different elections.

While everyone finds different ways to track and manage information, there is no doubt that it is a crucial part of the election officer’s work. Good information management and communication with your counterparts will benefit your campaigns when you have ones, and your overall work.

Chapter Three:

Candidatures in the Digital Era



UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE



The practice of diplomacy has grown to reflect recent changes in global communications trends. This is particularly evident within the multilateral system, where countries have to campaign to be elected to high offices within the UN system, either for themselves as member states, or for their nationals. Within the context of a constantly evolving “elections world”, branding has become of importance to campaigns at all levels: from the Security Council to Human Rights Treaty Bodies and other mechanisms.

Traditionally, a standard campaign would include the announcement of a candidature by Note Verbale, followed by a reception to formally introduce the candidate and launch the campaign. Elections Officers would then mount a lobbying strategy, which would include the candidate visiting New York at least once before the election date to have meetings with Elections Officers, Deputy Permanent Representatives, Permanent Representatives, or other Mission officials to seek the support of their countries. Depending on the profile of the contested post, the campaign could also include the staging of events designed to promote the visibility of the candidature, up until Election Day. The reality of COVID-19 and the subsequent implementation of social distancing policies, however, have greatly affected the elections’ world, and caused Elections Officers to revisit the aforementioned traditional campaign process.

Over the past years, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, delegations present in New York have had to become attuned to different digital options to promote their candidates our national candidatures, cognizant of the importance of ensuring their candidate’s visibility. Building an effective campaign strategy has, therefore, become a crucial tool for the Election Officer to master, as part of their practice.

I. Building a Campaign Strategy

A campaign strategy is a planned course of action carefully designed by a campaign manager or a team of strategists, detailing a list of activities which, ideally, will result in the election of a candidate or Member State to a competitive post. The effective campaign strategy takes into consideration several components, but can be narrowed down into three categories, namely:

A. Communication

Effective communication is one of the most important elements of a campaign strategy due to the direct relationship between effective communication and the outcome of a campaign. Within the current context, effective communication refers to the transmission of key information on a candidature to the relevant constituents, in a way that



is appropriate and efficient. Where there is effective communication, both the sender and the receiver have the same understanding of the information that is being conveyed.

Effective communication also ensures that the information being conveyed is received by the intended constituent. This will allow for concerns of Member States to be addressed where they may arise. For example, communicating what makes your candidate unique, what added value they would bring the body, and what issues would they push for if elected.

It is worth bearing in mind that an election officer must always be engaged, as campaigning should never be reserved only for the ‘EO social season’³².

B. Creativity

The increasing demands of campaigning, coupled with the strained circumstances of social engagement has necessitated the application of creativity in executing duties as election officers. This creativity, which lends itself to the use of imagination to arrive at original ideas, allows for attracting and retaining visibility, facilitating the exchange of information, and helps to set the tone for the remainder of the campaign.

C. Visibility

A successful campaign strategy is one that allows for enhanced and maintained visibility, across all the necessary levels. Visibility must be both active through events, briefings, and bilateral meetings, as well as passive. Both help with instilling the candidatures in the forefront of the minds of the UN community.

³² The *EO Social Season* may be defined as the period of the General Assembly directly preceding major elections, when campaigns and elections officers’ activities are at their peak. There are normally two (2) seasons: October - November, and April – June.

II. Resource Mobilization

Resource mobilization is crucial to any well-planned campaign strategy, as the extent of outreach is directly affected by the availability of resources. In respect of campaigning, there are three (3) categories of resources to be kept in mind: Financial, material, and human.

Of the three, financial resources are usually the most apparent. All campaigns require some amount of funding. It is therefore crucial that the election officer be aware of the budget available for the campaign during the initial stages of preparing the strategy, as this provides a framework around which the campaign can be built. Different bodies will necessitate different levels of campaigning, which all have different financial implications.

The availability of financial resources will determine accessibility to material and human resources for a campaign. Material includes such things as campaign paraphernalia and gifts. Human resources are relative to the size of the team that is available to advance the campaign.

It is worth noting that different countries will have different levels of access to resources. For smaller delegations, the prevailing challenge remains how to do more with less or within existing resources, in an effort to maintain the competitive advantage. This is an element that has to be properly considered by the Election Officer preparing the election's strategy.

While budget plays a role in the availability of resources an election officer has in their hands, it is not a decisive factor, and especially in the modern age of technology – Elections Officers can run successful campaigns with a limited scope and budget.



III. Managing Campaign events

Events are the staple of an effective campaign strategy, and therefore need to be properly conceptualized and executed. Each event will require different levels of preparation, and will most likely involve studying the brand, identifying the target audience and invitees, devising the event concept, and coordinating the technical aspects before actually launching the event. [2]³³

As diplomats, we are often foreign to our milieu, which can make it difficult to navigate the environment in the way required to properly execute the event. It is therefore important to comprise a list of areas with which to be familiar, so that execution becomes easier when required. For example, elections officers should comprise for themselves a list of venues, restaurants, caterers, and event rental agencies, as well as the costs associated with all of these. It is also always good to consult with members of the Mission or even other Elections Officers who have spent an extended period in New York for advice or assistance in this regard.



UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE

³³ Ramsborg, G.C.; Miller, B. et al, (2008), *Professional Meeting Management: Comprehensive Strategies for meetings, conventions and events*, 5th ed. Kendall/Hunt Publishing, Dubuque, Iowa. ISBN 0-7575-5212-9

IV. WhatsApp campaigning

WhatsApp has become a popular means of campaigning for Elections Officers, partly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has limited traditional means of outreach. UN Elections Officers have had to master a new range of skills to allow them to effectively lead digital campaigns, especially using WhatsApp as one of these delivery and communications platforms.³⁴

Some of the most common practices include the transmission of campaign messages, which include vital information on the candidature. There is often the transmission of campaign paraphernalia such as posters, videos or brochures, invitations, and registration links to virtual events and even the formal transmission of Notes Verbales.

Campaigning on WhatsApp in New York unfolds on three (3) levels: the Elections Officers (EO) Group Chat, sub-regional or specialized group chats or individual chats. This, interestingly, mimics the principle of diplomatic engagement at the multilateral, hemispheric/regional and bilateral levels. Outreach at all levels, however, is tailored to fit the audience. That is to say, the messaging and outreach approach taken by an election official in the EO WhatsApp group, or a regional/specialized group chat will usually differ from the approach and message conveyed bilaterally.

WhatsApp campaigning has proven to be very advantageous and efficient, given one's ability to control the flow of communication on their country's candidature. Elections Officers also use WhatsApp to convey regional candidatures charts on a monthly basis. These charts are the lifeline of the election's community, as they collate in one place all the candidatures of the various geographic groups, which allow for ease of reference and cross referencing. At the bilateral level, Elections Officers use WhatsApp to discuss, propose and conclude reciprocal or cross-support arrangements with other countries.

³⁴ Ashley, K. (2021), "WhatsApp Diplomacy": The future of multilateralism in a Post-COVID 19 world?, UNITAR, New York, retrieved from: <https://unitar.org/sites/default/files/media/file/Whatsapp%20Diplomacy%20FINAL.PDF>

ELECTION OFFICER HANDBOOK

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