

Conference of European Churches

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly DRAFT – CURRENT CONSTITUTION (LEUVEN 2014) – FOR NOVI SAD

to be formally adopted by the General Assembly at Novi Sad, 31 May 2018

Part A – General Provisions

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Part A – General Provisions

A.1 Convening of the General Assembly

- A.1.1 An ordinary General Assembly shall be convened at least once a year. An extraordinary General Assembly shall be convened if one fifth (1/5) of the Members or two thirds (2/3) of the members of the Governing Board so request.
- A.1.2 Each Member Church or Federation of Churches (hereafter referred to as Member) shall be obliged to inform the General Secretary via regular mail and/or via any other means of written communication (including e-mail) who shall represent it vis-à-vis the Conference in between General Assemblies. This person or persons shall receive all communications of the Conference, including the invitation to participate in General Assemblies ('convening notice').
- A.1.3 The General Assembly shall be convened by the Governing Board. The convening notice shall state if the General Assembly is held as a physical meeting or if it shall be conducted in written procedure. It shall include the date, duration and, if appropriate, the place.
- A.1.4 The convening notice shall include the number of Delegates apportioned to every Member Church.
- A.1.5 Members shall notify the General Secretary of the names of their Delegates two months after the notification of the date and times of a physical General Assembly. With this notification, each Member must also provide the name and address, physical and electronical, of each concerned Delegate. Special provisions shall apply if a Member wishes to change their delegates in between two physical General Assemblies.
- A.1.6 If the General Secretary receives no notification according to A.1.5, it shall be assumed that the Member is represented by the last Delegate(s) to be officially known to represent it towards the Conference. Should the number of Delegates apportioned to the Member in question be smaller than before, the lot will decide which of the Delegates shall be taken from the list. Should the number of Delegates apportioned to the Member in question be higher than before, it is up to the Member to seek remedy by nominating another Delegate.

A.1.6 The Governing Board shall be obliged to issue any communication of the Conference relating to the General Assembly, in particular the convening notice with all documents belonging to it, to the known headquarters of the member as well as directly to the Delegate(s) last notified as representing the Member.

A.2 Agenda

A.2.1 The convening notice shall contain the Agenda of the General Assembly as proposed by the Governing Board. Where appropriate, a short explanation of the items to be discussed or the motions to be voted on should be given.

A.2.2 Delegates have the right to propose amendments to the Agenda in the time specified in B.2. A request to add a specific item to the Agenda should be granted.

A.2.3 At every meeting of the General Assembly, the Agenda shall contain at least the following:

- the accounts of the previous financial year;
- the budget for the next financial year;
- the discharge of the Governing Board and the auditors.

Part B – Physical Assemblies

B.1 Convening of a physical General Assembly

B.1.1 The Governing Board shall convene the General Assembly no later than three months before the date fixed. However, information about the date of the next physical General Assembly shall be sent out to the Members at least eighteen (18) months in advance.

B.1.2 Further to the number of Delegates apportioned to each Member, the convening notice shall contain an indication as to how recommended balances should be reflected in the composition of the delegations depending on their size.

B.1.3 If a decision according to Article 15 (2) of the Constitution needs to be recorded in a notarial deed according to the requirements of Belgian law, and this requirement cannot be met at a General Assembly, a third reading of the motion shall be held at an extraordinary General Assembly in the presence of a Belgian notary public in Belgium.

B.2 Agenda

B.2.1 Delegates may submit supplementary proposals and amendments to the General Secretary in writing until no later than four weeks before the beginning of the session.

B.2.2 The General Assembly shall approve the Agenda at its first business session. Proposals for amendments may be accepted at this session.

B.3 Sessions of the General Assembly

- B.3.1 The General Assembly may meet either in general session or in business session. The presiding Moderator shall on each occasion announce whether the General Assembly is meeting in general or in business session.
- B.3.2 The General Assembly shall meet in general session for acts of worship, ceremonies and official addresses. A quorum is not required for a general session.
- B.3.3 The General Assembly shall meet in business session to carry out its constitutional functions or to take any other decisions relevant to the agenda.
- B.3.4 These Rules of Procedure shall apply to business sessions. During general sessions they should be applied as appropriate.
- B.3.5 The General Assembly may decide to meet in closed business session at times. Only Delegates, members of the Governing Board, the ‘Officers of the Assembly’ according to B.4.2 and indispensable technical support staff shall be present, unless the General Assembly formally admits other persons, especially the executive staff of the Secretariat.

B.4 Participation and participant’s rights

- B.4.1 The following shall participate in the General Assembly:
- (a) Delegates according to Art. 7 (2) and (3) of the Constitution, with the right to speak, to table amendments and to vote.
 - (b) The Moderator, and the Vice-Moderators that are not Delegates, with the right to speak and table motions;
 - (c) Non-delegate members of the Governing Board, with the right to speak and to table motions;
 - (d) Representatives of Organisations in Partnership and National Councils of Churches, with the right to speak;
 - (e) Youth advisors, with the right to speak;
 - (f) Legal Advisers, with the right to speak on legal and procedural matters;
 - (g) Executive staff of the Secretariat, without the right to speak, unless authorized according to B.4.3.
 - (h) Observers;
 - (i) Guests;
 - (j) The other ‘Officers of the Assembly’ according to B.4.2 and technical staff.
- B.4.2 The ‘Officers of the Assembly’ shall be the Moderator and the two Vice-Moderators, the General Secretary of the Conference as Secretary of the General Assembly as of right, the two Legal Advisors appointed by the General Assembly, and the Minute Takers appointed by the General Secretary.

- B.4.3 Participants with the right to speak are entitled to speak only once on each item on the agenda. With the agreement of the two Vice-Moderators, the Moderator may permit exceptions.
- B.4.4 The Moderator, with the agreement of the two Vice-Moderators, may invite to speak participants according to B.4.1.(f)-(h).
- B.4.5 All speakers shall address the presiding Moderator.
- B.4.6 The presiding Moderator may limit the time accorded to speakers. Expiry of the allotted time must be announced one (1) minute in advance.

B.5 Constitution of the General Assembly

- B.5.1 The President shall open the General Assembly, shall determine whether it has been convened and has met in accordance with all relevant regulation, and shall conduct the General Assembly until the Moderator and the two Vice-Moderators of the General Assembly have been elected.
- B.5.2 The General Secretary shall, before the opening of the first business session, inform the Moderator in writing,
- (a) whether the Delegates present have been duly appointed by the Member they represent;
 - (b) which members of the Governing Board are present at the General Assembly, and whether they are Delegates or non-delegate participants;
 - (c) who is, in the case a Member has more than one delegate, head of the delegation for the purpose of establishing the presence quorum;
 - (d) whether the General Assembly has a quorum and how many votes are required to obtain either a simple, a qualified or a two thirds (2/3) majority - subject, if necessary, to verification at individual plenary sessions;
 - (e) which persons shall be entitled to speak during the General Assembly as of right and which might be given the right to speak according to B.4.4.
- B.5.3 The General Assembly has a quorum if Delegates present represent at least half of the Members.
- B.5.4 The General Secretary shall ensure that all Delegates receive their voting cards. Green cards shall be used for votes in favour, red cards for votes against, and white cards for abstentions.
- B.5.5 Upon proposal of the President, the General Assembly shall first appoint at least two (2) Tellers, one (1) of whom must be a Delegate.
- B.5.6 Upon proposal of the President, the General Assembly shall appoint two (2) Legal Advisors in order to ensure that all relevant legal provisions are respected.
- B.5.7 Upon proposal of the President, the General Assembly shall elect the Moderator and the two (2) Vice-Moderators of the General Assembly. One (1) of the two Vice-Moderators may be a Delegate.

B.6 Rights and duties of the Moderator

- B.6.1 In taking the Chair, the Moderator shall have precedence over the two Vice-Moderators. Upon leaving the Chair, he or she shall, in consultation with his two Vice-Moderators, determine which of the two shall take to the Chair. Upon leaving the Chair, a Vice-Moderator shall offer the Chair to the Moderator first. The person in the Chair shall be known as the ‘presiding Moderator’ but shall be addressed as ‘Moderator’ only.
- B.6.2 The Moderator shall chair the sessions of the General Assembly, and shall in particular fulfill the following duties:
- (a) ensure the orderly and fair conduct of the debates, having authority to rule speakers out of order and to expel disruptors after due warning has been given;
 - (b) establish that a quorum is attained;
 - (c) open, suspend and close the sessions;
 - (d) open and close the debate on each item on the agenda;
 - (e) determine the sequence of elections and votes and announce the results;
 - (f) determine the order of speakers;
 - (g) call on speakers;
 - (h) set time limits according to B.4.6.
- B.6.3 The decisions of the presiding Moderator are final, with the exception of announcing the results of elections or votes, and decisions on ‘points of order’ according to B.9.1.
- B.6.4 If wishing to speak or to table a motion, the presiding Moderator must first leave the Chair, and may take the Chair again only after a decision has been reached on the subject under discussion.
- B.6.5 Should the Moderator be unable to take the Chair or to determine who should preside in his or her stead, the two Vice-Moderators shall take equal shares in chairing the sessions, with the older person being the first.

B.7 Committees of the General Assembly

- B.7.1 At every ordinary physical General Assembly, at least the following committees shall function:
- (a) The Steering Committee;
 - (b) the Nominations Committee;
 - (c) the Finance Committee;
 - (d) the Strategy and Policy Committee.

At the proposal of the Governing Board, at ordinary physical General Assemblies usually also

- (e) a Public Issues Committee
- (f) a Message Committee

shall be elected, which will work closely together.

- B.7.2 At an extraordinary physical General Assembly, with the exception of extraordinary General Assemblies according to B.8.8 and B.14, at least the Steering Committee shall function. Depending on the requirements of the agenda, the Steering Committee will set up other Committees. Should the agenda require elections to be held, the Governing Board shall propose to the General Assembly a Nominations Committee according to B.10.1.
- B.7.3 The Moderator and Vice-Moderators of the General Assembly, the President and the Vice-Presidents of the Conference, the Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the 'Assembly Planning Committee', if such committee has been established, the 'Secretary of the General Assembly', the Moderator of the 'Local Preparatory Committee', if such committee has been established, together with the 'Assembly Coordinator' and the two Legal Advisors shall constitute the Steering Committee of the General Assembly.
- B.7.4 The Steering Committee shall assist the Moderator in the conduct of the General Assembly.
- B.7.5 The members of the Steering Committee shall be entitled to participate in an advisory capacity in meetings of the Finance Committee, the Strategy and Policy Committee and the other committees according to B.7.6 and B.7.7.
- B.7.6 Further to B.7.1, the Steering Committee may set up working groups or committees to assist the General Assembly in conducting its business and thematic work.
- B.7.7 Likewise, the General Assembly may set up working groups or committees, in particular for organising special events for the community (ceremonies, prayers, cultural events etc.).
- B.7.8 For the duration of its meeting, the General Assembly shall elect ten (10) of its Delegates who, together with the Budget Committee of the Governing Board, form the Finance Committee.
- B.7.9 The Finance Committee shall discuss the financial situation of the Conference. Having assessed the assets and income of the conference, it shall present to the General Assembly a concise financial report and give recommendations in areas such as fundraising and a mid- to long-term financial planning.
- B.7.10 At its first business session, the General Assembly shall appoint from among the participants of the General Assembly keynote-listeners for all relevant thematic sessions, in the plenary as well as in working groups. There should be no less than five (5) and no more than ten (10) keynote listeners.
- B.7.11 The keynote-listeners shall have the duty to take notes of the general lines of the discussions and highlight relevant aspects. Where appropriate, the presiding Moderator may call upon keynote-listeners to report to the General Assembly.

- B.7.12 The keynote-listeners, together with an equal number of Delegates elected by the General Assembly, shall form the Strategy and Policy Committee.
- B.7.13 The Strategy and Policy Committee shall discuss, in the light of the theme of the General Assembly selected by the Governing Board, the following:
- The report of the General Secretary of the Conference;
 - any thematic addresses to the General Assembly;
 - any relevant results of the group work;
 - any draft recommendations or statements tabled for the General Assembly to be adopted.
- B.7.14 The Strategy and Policy Committee shall evaluate the progress made in achieving the strategic objectives of the Conference, and make proposals for their development and the future work of the Conference in general. It shall submit these proposals at least twenty-four (24) hours before the relevant vote.
- B.7.15 The General Assembly committees shall appoint their own officers.
- B.7.16 With the exception of the Nominations Committee, the General Assembly committees may resolve to invite individual advisers, observers and other persons with the right to speak in the General Assembly according to B.4.1, to attend their meetings in an advisory capacity and to call on staff from the General Secretariat to assist them in their work.

B.8 Debates and Decisions

- B.8.1 The presiding Moderator shall allow debate on each item on the agenda.
- B.8.2 Motions may be tabled by any Delegate, the Moderator and the non-delegate Vice-Moderators and non-delegate members of the Governing Board. Each motion must be seconded by at least two (2) Delegates.
- B.8.3 All motions regarding the agenda, the Rules of Procedure or the Constitution must be submitted to the presiding Moderator in writing together with the name of the movers, seconders, if applicable, and their church affiliation.
- B.8.4 Amendments to motions concerning the Constitution or the Rules of Procedure will be taken as tabled if they have been submitted following the procedure according to B.8.3 before the beginning of the General Assembly either through the General Secretariat or through the Governing Board, who shall hand them to the Moderator before the first business session.
- B.8.5 All motions must be read out before the relevant vote is taken.
- B.8.6 Amendments may be tabled under the same conditions. They must be tabled before the voting on the original motion has begun.
- B.8.7 Amendments to the Constitution require at least two (2) readings, between which the Moderator must allow for at least six (6) hours time for consideration. The General

Assembly may be asked to deliberate in committees or working groups between the readings.

- B.8.8 In case amendments to the Constitution require to be recorded in a notarial deed according to Belgian law, and that requirement could not be met at the second reading, another final reading must be held in an extraordinary General Assembly that meets all requirements under Belgian law. Further details are to be laid down under B.14.
- B.8.9 Every motion to amend the Constitution must contain a provision when, without prejudice to applicable and cogent Belgian law, the revised Constitution shall enter into force. If no such provision is made, the General Secretary shall deposit the amendments with the clerk's office of the Brussels' Commercial Court within two months after the closure of the General Assembly at which the amendments have been adopted, and shall also seek a Royal Decree if necessary at the same time. The amendments shall then enter into force as soon as all legal requirements have been met.
- B.8.10 The presiding Moderator shall ensure that it is clearly understood which motion or amendment is being debated at any given time.
- B.8.11 At the start of the debate, the proposer of a motion shall explain the grounds for so moving, and shall have the right to speak to the motion again at the end of the debate.
- B.8.12 In case of competing motions on the same item, the motion with the most far reaching implications shall be voted on first. If passed, competing motions are regarded as rejected. If rejected, the same procedure shall be followed for the remaining motions, until a motion has been successfully passed or all have been rejected.
- B.8.13 If there is a motion to amend an amendment already tabled, this motion shall be voted on first. In case of competing motions, B.8.12 shall apply accordingly.
- B.8.14 In order to ensure a fair balance of arguments in a debate, the presiding Moderator may, at his or her discretion, ask Delegates wishing to speak to submit a card with his or her name, church affiliation and an indication of the position to be taken on the subject.

B.9 Closure of the debate, points of order, points of procedure

- B.9.1 Delegates have the right to move for 'closure of the debate' or raise 'points of order' or 'points of procedure' at any time. This shall be indicated to the presiding Moderator by raising both hands at the same time.
- B.9.2 A Delegate may move 'closure of the debate' on any item currently debated, provided that this does not interrupt another speaker. The presiding Moderator shall have discretion to decide when to allow such a motion to be put to the vote.

- B.9.3 The motion to close the debate shall be put to the vote without discussion. If it is carried by two thirds (2/3) of the Delegates present, the item in question shall be put to the vote immediately and without further debate. In the case of an amendment, this applies only to the amendment, not to the original motion. In order to close debate on the entire subject, a separate motion to close the debate is required.
- B.9.3 A Delegate may at any time raise a question relating to a 'point of order' if he or she considers that these Rules of Procedure are not being duly respected. The presiding Moderator shall, upon consultation with the Legal Advisors, rule on the matter. If the ruling is disputed by a Delegate, another Moderator or a non-delegate Member or the Governing Board, the General Assembly shall vote on whether the Rules of Procedure have been respected or not.
- B.9.4 A Delegate may at any time raise a 'point of procedure' and ask the presiding Moderator to clarify the subject under discussion or the procedures in question.

B.10 Voting

- B.10.1 Each Delegate shall have one (1) vote.
- B.10.2 By way of derogation from B.10.1, a Delegate may also exercise voting rights conferred on her/him by another Member (Church) of the Conference. If that Member has conferred voting rights directly to that Delegate, she/he may exercise all the voting rights conferred on him/her (up to five votes). If the Member has conferred more than one voting right to another Member, and if the former Member (proxy giver) has more than one vote to confer, while the latter Member (proxy recipient) has more than one Delegate, the latter must decide if one or more of its Delegates shall exercise the voting rights of the former Member. The General Secretary must be informed about the transfer of voting rights in writing along with the notification about attendance/Delegates, so that the voting cards can be distributed correctly. The transfer of votes within one Delegation, be it the proper votes of the Member or proxy votes conferred on that Member, is not permissible.
- B.10.3 Votes shall normally be cast by displaying coloured voting cards. If at least three Delegates request for a secret written ballot, this request must be granted.
- B.10.4 Motions shall be carried by a simple majority of the Delegates present and voting, except where a qualified majority is required according to the Constitution. In the event of a tied vote the motion shall be considered as rejected. Abstentions shall not affect the result of the vote.
- B.10.5 The result of a vote shall as soon as possible be announced by the presiding Moderator, upon consultation with the Tellers. Should such an announcement be called in question by a Delegate, a vote must be taken immediately on whether the vote on the issue concerned should be repeated.
- B.10.6 Pursuant to B.6.2.(b), the Moderator shall regularly ascertain that the General Assembly has a quorum by announcing the total number of votes cast. Should a Delegate so request, the Moderator shall ask the heads of each delegation to raise

their green voting cards for verification. Heads of delegations are required to ensure that their Member's presence can be established if they have to leave the plenary.

B.11 Consensus mode

- B.11.1 At the request of at least 2/3 (two thirds) of the delegates of one of the three church families (Protestant, Orthodox [Eastern, Oriental], Anglican/Old Catholic) decisions on theological or socio-ethical issues shall be reached using a consensus mode.
- B.11.2 At the request of more than half of the delegates also decisions on statements and recommendations issued in the name of the General Assembly shall be reached using such a mode.
- B.11.3 In this mode, no votes shall be taken. Instead, the presiding Moderator shall establish if the General Assembly can reach a consensus on the matter in question. A consensus shall be considered to be reached, if no Delegate objects to the presiding Moderator's proposal to make a declaration of consensus.
- B.11.4 During the course of a debate, the presiding Moderator shall, at his discretion, establish whether the General Assembly tends towards a certain direction or not. This can be done also on individual aspects of the proposal in question.
- B.11.5 Delegates in favour shall raise their green voting cards, Delegates against their red voting cards. No count of votes shall be minuted. If a clear majority tends towards a certain direction, those against can be asked to indicate whether they could accept a General Assembly's consensus on the general line, without having to subscribe to it in every detail. Upon request, objectors shall have the right to propose a minority opinion to be recorded in the minutes.
- B.11.6 In order to reach a consensus, the discussion may be referred to smaller discussion groups, before the General Assembly continues its plenary debate.
- B.11.7 If no consensus becomes apparent, the General Assembly shall decide whether the issue shall be taken up at a later stage, referred to the continuous work of the Conference for further elaboration, or entirely dropped. It can also be ascertained, whether those against would accept a proposal for further work by the Conference, without however, supporting it. These decisions shall also follow the above procedure.
- B.11.8 Before an issue is entirely dropped, a working group of up to seven (7) Delegates in favour and against respectively shall be set up to explore if the General Assembly could find another way of expressing a common understanding on the matter.

B.12 Elections

- B.12.1 The General Assembly shall elect, upon a proposal by the Governing Board, at its first business session ten (10) persons to sit on a Nominations Committee, seven of whom must be delegates (voting members of the Committee), while up to three can

be non-delegate members of the Governing Board (advisors of the Committee). The Chair of the Governing Board's Nominations Panel is an ex-officio member of the Nominations Committee.

- B.12.2 The Nominations Committee shall elect from among its voting members a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary.
- B.12.3 The Nominations Committee will usually reach its recommendations by way of consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, only Delegates shall be voting members of the Committee. In reaching its decisions, the Nominations Committee should take into account the proposals of the Governing Board's Nominations Panel, without, however, being bound by any proposals or recommendations from any third party.
- B.12.4 The Nominations Committee shall make proposals to the General Assembly regarding the following:
- (a) the General Assembly's Strategy and Policy Committee;
 - (b) the General Assembly's Finance Committee;
 - (c) additional committees of the General Assembly according to B.7.7.
 - (d) the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the Conference;
 - (e) the members of Governing Board of the Conference.
 - (f) the proxy members for the Governing Board.
- B.12.5 Delegates, non-delegate members of the Governing Board and representatives of Organisations in Partnership as well as of National Councils of Churches shall be eligible for election to the committees listed under B.12.4 (a) and (c). Members of the Nominations Committee as well as members of the Governing Board's Nominations Panel shall not be eligible for any elections under B.12.4.
- B.12.6 In making its proposals, the Nominations Committee shall be guided by the following:
- The personal qualification of the individual for the task for which she/he is to be nominated;
 - a fair and adequate confessional representation;
 - a fair and adequate geographical and cultural representation;
 - a fair representation of lay persons;
 - a fair balance of gender and age.
- B.12.7 In the session the Nominations Committee is elected, the General Assembly shall also decide, based on a proposal by the Governing Board, on the number of members of the committees listed under B.12.4 (a) and (c).
- B.12.8 The Nominations Committee shall submit to the General Assembly through the Moderator a proposal for President and Vice-Presidents, up to two candidates for each office, taking into account Article 9 (3) of the Constitution.
- B.12.9 The Nominations Committee shall submit to the General Assembly through the Moderator a proposal for each body to be elected, containing as many names as the body concerned shall have members. The criteria according to B.12.6 shall be listed alongside the names. The Committee shall be given the opportunity to present its proposal to the General Assembly.

- B.12.10 Delegates wishing to make an alternative proposal for one or more candidates may table such an amendment within two (2) hours after the Nominations Committee has submitted its proposal. In the case of elections to the Governing Board, this limit shall be twenty four (24) hours. Such an amendment must be signed by at least ten Delegates. The alternative candidates must be of the same denomination and come from the same region of Europe as the candidates whose nomination is challenged.
- B.12.11 The presiding Moderator shall announce whether the persons proposed are eligible and willing to stand as candidates.
- B.12.12 The General Assembly shall first decide in each individual case by open vote whether the person originally proposed should remain on the list. If the motion for the person to stay on the list is carried, the motion to amend is rejected. If the motion for the person to stay on the list is rejected, a vote must be taken on every individual alternative candidate proposed. The person obtaining the most votes is elected. Should two (2) or more persons obtain the same number of votes, the decision shall be taken in a run-off ballot.
- B.12.13 After the proposal of the Nominations Committee has been thus confirmed or amended, it will be put to the vote. If the vote is carried, all candidates are elected.
- In case of a secret ballot, votes are cast by crossing either 'yes' or 'no' on a ballot paper. When no cross is made, the vote shall be considered an abstention. Ballot papers which contain comments shall be invalid.
- B.12.14 In case the proposal of the Nominations Committee fails to obtain a majority as a whole, a separate vote shall be taken for each confirmed candidate. Candidates obtaining the majority of votes are elected.
- In case of a secret ballot, each Delegate shall have one (1) cross for each candidate he or she supports. When no cross is made on the paper, the vote shall be considered an abstention. Ballot papers on which more than one (1) cross has been made against the same name, or on which names have been added or deleted, or which contain comments, shall be invalid.
- B.12.15 In place of the candidates not elected, the Nominations Committee shall draw up a new proposal which must contain names different from the original list. The procedure set out in B.12.8-14 shall then be followed until the allotted number of members for each body concerned has been elected.
- B.12.16 After each secret written ballot the presiding Moderator shall announce the number of valid and invalid votes cast and the number of positive and negative votes either for the list of candidates as a whole or for each individual candidate. Where appropriate, he or she shall also announce the number of abstentions.
- B.12.17 After the announcement according to B.12.16, the presiding Moderator shall ask the persons elected altogether, if they accept their election. Where it is possible to elect persons in their absence, this consent must be ascertained by other means. If no objection is raised, the presiding Moderator shall declare the respective body elected.

B.12.18 The Nominations Committee is responsible for all other nominations for elections in the General Assembly unless the Rules of Procedure provide otherwise, or the Steering Committee decides differently in individual cases.

B.13 Secretariat, Minutes and Official Register

B.13.1 Responsibility for the minuting of the General Assembly proceedings lies with the Secretary of the General Assembly; he or she shall appoint at least two (2) Minute Takers.

B.13.2 The minutes of business sessions shall contain the names of all speakers, and a short summary of the position they have taken. It shall include the exact wording of all motions, the name of the mover, and additional to that state that the minimum of seconders has been met. It shall also include the result of any vote, including the numbers of votes cast in favour, against and abstentions.

B.13.3 Minutes of general sessions shall be taken as appropriate.

B.13.4 The General Secretary shall issue, within three months after the General Assembly, the minutes, signed by the minute takers and the President, to all Members and Delegates. In the same time, he or she shall also publish the preliminary texts of all decisions, statements and recommendations and the lists of bodies elected and, if applicable, the members thereof.

B.13.5 If no Member raises any objections to the minutes within two (2) months after the distribution, the Governing Board shall take the decision to add the minutes to the Official Register of minutes and decisions. If there are objections, the next General Assembly shall decide on the final wording before it takes the decision to add the minutes to the official register.

B.13.6 The official register of minutes shall be kept at all times in the General Secretariat. This register shall also contain a separate section on decisions taken. It must be accessible to all Members.

B.13.7 With the convening notice to every physical General Assembly, the General Secretary shall include a report on how the recorded decisions of the recent General Assemblies, back to the last physical General Assembly, have been implemented.

B.14 Special Provisions

B.14.1 In the case referred to in B.1.3, the Governing Board shall convene an extraordinary General Assembly within two month after the closure of the second reading, to be held no later than six months later, in the presence of a Belgian notary public.

B.14.2 In the convening notice, it shall be made clear that, at such an extraordinary General Assembly, no further amendments can be tabled. The vote will exclusively be to confirm the decisions formerly taken by the General Assembly according to Art. 15 of the Constitution.

- B.14.3 In the convening notice, it shall be recommended to the Members to give proxy to a Delegate of another Member, who should generally be either the President or one of the two Vice-Presidents of the Conference.
- B.14.4 The extraordinary General Assembly shall have a quorum, when at least half of the Members of the Conference are present or represented.
- B.14.5 For the extraordinary General Assembly it shall be recommended that the President of the Conference and the two Vice-Presidents of the Conference shall be elected as Moderator and Vice-Moderators respectively.
- B.14.6 The notarial deed done at this extraordinary General Assembly shall also be the official minutes of this meeting.
- B.14.7 The provisions of B.1-13 shall be applied as appropriate.

Part C – Written Procedure

C.1 Convening of a General Assembly conducted in Writing

- C.1.1 In years when it is not feasible to call a physical meeting of the General Assembly, the Governing Board must nevertheless convene a General Assembly. In such a case, the General Assembly shall be conducted in a written procedure.
- C.1.2 The convening notice shall be issued via regular mail and/or via any other means of written communication (including e-mail) at least two (2) months in advance of the final date to vote.
- C.1.3 The Agenda of the written procedure will be determined by the motions proposed by the Governing Board. Members shall only be asked to vote upon those proposals, but shall not be entitled to add new items to the agenda or delete items from the Agenda.
- C.1.4 A copy of all documents to be discussed and approved must be enclosed with the invitations. These documents include a report by the Governing Board setting out and explaining the proposal to be voted upon.
- C.1.5 As from the date of the notification made by the Governing Board, each Member shall, within ten (10) calendar days, notify to the General Secretary in writing the name and address, physical and electronical, of its Delegate(s). If the General Secretary receives no such notification, it shall be assumed that the Member is represented by the last Delegate(s) to be officially known to represent it towards the Conference.
- C.1.6 As from the date of the notification made by the Governing Board, Delegates have fifteen (15) days to put forward in writing any questions they might have regarding the proposals.
- C.1.7 The Governing Board will answer to all questions received in writing. It will submit a summary of the questions and answers to all Delegates at least eight (8) days before the General Assembly takes place.

- C.1.8 On the basis of the questions and answers, the Governing Board has the right to adjust or correct any material error in the documents or proposals to be discussed or approved. The final version of the proposal and the documents to be approved shall be sent to all Members at least eight (8) days before the General Assembly takes place.
- C.1.9 Upon receipt of the final version of the proposal and the documents to be approved, each Delegate shall in writing clearly and unambiguously agree, reject or abstain to every motion tabled. The vote must be cast until the end of the last day to vote, according to official Brussels time.
- C.1.10 If a Delegate has not reacted until this last day to vote, he or she shall be counted as having voted in favour.
- C.11 For a motion to be accepted, a simple majority of the total amount of Delegates apportioned to the Members is required, with the exception of those cases where a qualified majority is a requirement according to the Constitution.
- C.12 The other provisions of these Rules of Procedure shall be applied as appropriate.