



Constitution

Adopted March 10, 1977 from the former Constitution and Rules which were adopted February 27, 1969 / Amended on February 13, 1973, March 26, 1974, July 6, 1982, February 3, 1993, December 6, 1995, December 4, 1996, April 30, 1998, and February 9, 2005.

PART A

STATUTES⁽¹⁾ OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Adopted in 1976, entirely revised in October 1983, amended in October 1987, September 1988, March 1989, April 1990, September 1992, September 1993, April 1995, April 1996, September 1998, April 1999, October 2000 and April 2001, entirely revised in April 2003, and amended in April and October 2004.

⁽¹⁾Nature, Purpose and Composition

ARTICLE 1

1. The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the international organization of the Parliaments of sovereign States.
2. As the focal point for world-wide parliamentary dialogue since 1889, the Inter-Parliamentary Union shall work for peace and cooperation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative institutions. To that end, it shall:
 - a. Foster contacts, coordination and the exchange of experience among Parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries;
 - b. Consider questions of international interest and express its views on such issues with the aim of bringing about action by Parliaments and their members;
 - c. Contribute to the defence and promotion of human rights, which are universal in scope and respect for which is an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development;
 - d. Contribute to better knowledge of the working of representative institutions and to the strengthening and development of their means of action.

3. The Union, which shares the objectives of the United Nations, supports its efforts and works in close cooperation with it. It also cooperates with the regional inter-parliamentary organizations, as well as with international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations which are motivated by the same ideals.

ARTICLE 2

The Headquarters of the Inter-Parliamentary Union shall be at Geneva.

ARTICLE 3

1. Every Parliament constituted in conformity with the laws of a sovereign State whose population it represents and on whose territory it functions may request affiliation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. A National Group representing any such Parliament and which is already affiliated at the time of the approval of this Article 2 may choose to remain a Member of the Union.

2. In a federal State, only the federal Parliament may request to be a Member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

3. Every Member of the Union shall adhere to the principles of the Union and comply with its Statutes.

4. International parliamentary assemblies established under international law by States which are represented in the Union may, upon their request and after consultation with the relevant Members of the Union, be admitted by the Governing Council as Associate Members

ARTICLE 4

1. The decision to admit or readmit a Parliament shall be taken by the Governing Council, to which requests for affiliation or reaffiliation are communicated by the Secretary General. The Governing Council takes its decision on prior advice given by the Executive Committee, which shall consider whether the conditions mentioned in Article 3 are fulfilled, and report thereon.

2. When a Member of the Union has ceased to function as such or is three years in arrears in the payment of its contributions to the Union, the Executive Committee shall consider the situation and express an opinion to the Governing Council. The Governing Council takes a decision on the suspension of the affiliation of that Member to the Union.

ARTICLE 5

1. Each Member and each Associate Member of the Union shall make an annual contribution to the expenses of the Union in accordance with a scale approved by the Governing Council (cf. Financial Regs., Rule 5).

2. A Member of the Union which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the organization shall have no votes in the statutory bodies of the Inter-Parliamentary Union if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due

from it for the preceding two full years. The Governing Council 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 of the Union. Prior to examining this question, the Governing Council may receive a written explanation from the Member concerned. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 10.2 of the Statutes, such a Member shall not be represented by more than two delegates at meetings convened by the Union.

ARTICLE 6

1. All Members or Associate Members of the Union shall have their own Rules governing their participation in the Union's work. They shall make all structural, administrative and financial provisions required to ensure effectively their representation in the Union, the implementation of the decisions taken and to maintain a regular liaison with the Secretariat of the Union to which they shall send, before the end of January of each year, a report of their activities, including the names of their officers and the list or the total number of their members.

2. It is the sovereign right of each Member of the Union to decide on the manner in which it organises its participation in the IPU.

ARTICLE 7

It is the duty of the Members of the Union to submit the resolutions of the Union within their respective Parliament, in the most appropriate form; to communicate them to the Government; to stimulate their implementation and to inform the Secretariat of the Union, as often and fully as possible, particularly in its annual reports, as to the steps taken and the results obtained (cf. Assembly, Rule 39.2).

PART B

RULES OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

RULE 1

NAME AND PURPOSE:

This organization shall be known as the Canadian Group and as such is Canada's National Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union established in conformity with Articles 1 and 3 of the Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union with headquarters at Geneva, Switzerland.

As the focal point for worldwide parliamentary dialogue since 1889, the Inter Parliamentary Union shall work for peace and cooperation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative institutions.

RULE 2

HEADQUARTERS:

The Headquarters of the Canadian Group shall be at the offices of the International and Interparliamentary Affairs Directorate, Parliament of Canada, Ottawa.

RULE 3

MEMBERSHIP:

The following are entitled to become members for the Canadian Group:

- a. The Speakers of the Senate and of the House of Commons who shall be Honorary Presidents of the Canadian Group;
- b. Members of the Senate and the House of Commons, upon application and payment of the annual fee as determined from time to time by the Executive Committee.

RULE 4

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

1. The Annual General Meeting of the membership shall be held at least once in each fiscal year when Parliament is in session.

An AGM must be held within 60 calendar days of the Opening of a new Parliament.

The Executive Committee or 10 members of the Group may call an Annual General Meeting.

2. Its functions shall include:

- a. Receiving the President's Annual Report of the activities of the Group and approving and ratifying the acts of the Executive Committee during the preceding year;
- b. Receiving and approving the expenditure report for the preceding fiscal year;
- c. Electing the Executive Committee;
- d. Receiving and approving any proposals for amendment of the Rules;
- e. Transacting any other necessary business which may be properly before the meeting;
- f. Make suggestions and adopt resolutions in accordance with the aims of the Group.

RULE 5

DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT:

In the event of a dissolution of Parliament, the Executive Committee in office at that time shall carry on the affairs of the Canadian Group, with due regard to policies and related procedures set out in the Financial Management and Policy Guide for Parliamentary Associations, until a General Meeting elects a new Executive Committee in accordance with Rules 10 and 11.

RULE 6

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING:

A Special General Meeting of the membership may be held at any time while Parliament is in session at the call of the executive committee or 10 members of the Group. It shall transact only such business as was designated in the notice of the meeting.

RULE 7

QUORUM:

Twenty or one-third of the total membership, whichever is the lesser amount, provided that the Senate and the House of Commons are represented, shall constitute a quorum at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting.

RULE 8

NOTICES:

1. Notice of the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting shall be given by email, where possible, at least two weeks in advance of the proposed date to the Parliamentary office of each member.
2. Such notice shall contain a statement of the business proposed to be transacted at such meeting, including any proposed changes in the Rules.

RULE 9

VOTING:

1. Voting at a General meeting shall be by show of hands, unless a written ballot is demanded by at least five members present.
2. Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority vote, except in the case of amendments to the Rules of the Group when a two-thirds vote of the members present at the meeting shall be required

RULE 10

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

1. The Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting to be composed of 14 members (4 from the Senate and 10 from the House of Commons):

- a. Three Officers: the President, who shall be a member of Government; the Vice-President, who shall be a member of the Official Opposition in the other Chamber; and the Past President. Should the Past President no longer be a Parliamentarian, the position will be replaced by a Second Vice President, who shall be a member of another opposition party.
- b. Eleven other members at large; provided that such representation reflects the financial contribution of the two Chambers and is in such proportion to the equitable representation of the recognized parties in both Chambers as may be determined by the Executive Committee.

Nothing precludes an independent Senator or MP from being a member of the executive.

To the extent that it is possible given the desirability that each political party should be represented on the executive and the size of these parties, members should not be eligible to serve on more than one association's executive committee.

The executive shall meet at the call of the Chair or any four of its members.

2. Four members shall constitute a quorum at a meeting of the Executive Committee, provided that a representative from each house is present.

3. Its functions shall include:

- a. Directing and managing the affairs and budget of the Group in accordance with the decisions taken at its General Meetings and directives of the Joint Interparliamentary Council.
- b. Preparing and submitting to the General Meeting the program of activities for the Group, including its participation in meetings, conferences and symposia convened under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and determining the budget for each program. The Executive Committee shall approve any activities, including travel, that is added to the Group's program of activities over the course of the year.
- c. Preparing the budget to operate the Group's annual program and contributions to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and submit it to the Joint Interparliamentary Council;
- d. Appointing replacements for unexpired terms when vacancies occur on the Executive Committee;
- e. Passing resolutions respecting the routine conduct of the affairs of the Group, as may be required;
- f. Presenting an annual report to the general membership, and submit reports to the membership as required;

- g. Ensuring transmission to the Union's Secretariat before January 31 of each year, a report of the Group's activities, including a list of its officers and members in accordance with Article 6 of the Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union;
- h. Taking appropriate steps to conform with Article 7 of the Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union;
- i. Selecting and/or approving the nomination of a member of the Group to hold a post or to act in an official capacity at a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union or at a special committee or symposium called under its auspices, including the approving of the additional cost which might be involved (the budget of the Group permitting) to allow for his or her so acting;
- j. Appointing a delegate to a meeting which has been unexpectedly called or a replacement on a delegation which has already been selected in accordance with Rule 15 and on which a vacancy occurs;
- k. Determining the ratio of representation of both Houses and all recognized political Parties on the Executive Committee for the ensuing year;
- l. Determining the ratio of representation of both Houses and all recognized political parties on delegations to meetings, conferences, or symposia held under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and determining the number of delegates and alternates, in accordance with that formula;
- m. Approving the acts of the President or Leader of a delegation where he or she is obliged to make decisions on behalf of the Group in emergency or unexpected situations;
- n. Establishing an annual fee for membership in the Group;
- o. Approving technical changes to the Rules;
- p. Convene the Annual General Meeting;
- q. Ensure that regular reports are submitted to the Senate and House of Commons, as required in the rules and practices of both Houses.

RULE 11

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The Group secretary shall distribute nomination forms to all members of the Group.

Nominations should be received at least 3 working days in advance of the AGM. The Group secretary should prepare a nominations report based on nominations received. Once the deadline has passed, the nominations should be made public.

In order to be eligible to vote, parliamentarians should be members of the Group at least seven days prior to the AGM. Once the deadline has passed, the names of all members eligible to vote shall be placed on a voters list.

Nominations will only be accepted from the floor at the AGM for positions for which no candidate has been nominated.

The election shall be presided over by a parliamentarian to be chosen from a list that has received the approval of the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons who is not nominated for a position on the executive of the Group. Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot with the support of the Group secretary and additional necessary staff from the International and Interparliamentary Affairs Directorate.

The ballot box shall be placed in full view and each parliamentarian shall insert his or her own ballot into the box.

RULE 12

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

1. The Executive Secretary of the Canadian Group shall be assigned from the staff of the Principal Clerk and Director General of International and Interparliamentary Affairs for such term of office as may be determined by the Principal Clerk and Director General.
2. His or her functions shall include:
 - a. Being accountable to members of the Canadian Group's executive committee, particularly to the President;
 - b. Being responsible for providing the administrative management for activities of the Canadian Group and for determining and coordinating any additional resources required to support these activities;
 - c. Attending meetings of the Group and acting as clerk thereof;
 - d. Giving notice of all meetings and being responsible for keeping the records and papers of the Group.

RULE 13

ADVISOR:

1. The Advisor to the Canadian Group shall be assigned from the staff of the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament for such term of office as may be determined by the Parliamentary Librarian or his or her designate.
2. His or her functions shall include:
 - a. Being accountable to the members of the Canadian Group's Executive Committee, particularly to the President;

- b. Being responsible for the identification, management and provision of research and advisory services for the activities of the Canadian Group;
3. Attending meetings of the Group and acting as advisor thereof;
 - a. Writing reports and related correspondence concerning the activities of the Canadian Group.

RULE 14

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION:

1. The operating year of the Canadian Group is the federal fiscal year commencing on the first day of April and ending on the thirty-first day of March the following year.
2. The funding of the Canadian Group will derived from:
 - a. The annual budget approved by the Joint Interparliamentary Council;
 - b. Membership Fees.
3. The authority to make financial commitments and incur expenditures shall rest with the President in consultation with the Vice-President. Should one of these two persons be absent or unable to fulfil his/her responsibilities, the other shall exercise the authority delegated to him/her by this Rule in consultation with another member of the Executive Committee, always in collaboration with the Executive Secretary.
4. A statement of expenditures will be presented to the Executive Committee by the Executive Secretary of the Group at its regular meetings.

RULE 15

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS, SYMPOSIA:

1. Members shall be notified in writing and in advance of the opportunity to participate in annual meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, normally held twice a year in the spring and fall, and invited to submit applications to attend as delegates.
2. Notices of meetings shall contain all relevant details, including the subjects studied and the number and composition of the delegation to be selected.
3. Applicants shall be advised that, as a condition of selection, they must undertake to attend all briefing sessions prior to the meeting and to give the time required to make a contribution and to attend the special and general sessions of meetings of the Conference in accordance with decisions taken by the Leader or the delegation as a whole.

RULE 16

DELEGATE SELECTION:

1. The list of the names of candidates received by the deadline indicated on the notice is forwarded to the Whips of all recognized parties in both houses.

2. The Whips determine their party representatives for the delegation, as well as their substitutes, and informs the Executive Secretary of their names, as far as possible in compliance with the following principles:

- a. That delegations be composed of men and women and that an effort be made to ensure equal representation of both genders, in accordance with Article 10 of the Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. This would also ensure that the delegation complies with Rule 1 of the Rules of the Governing Council, which requires the Council's representation to include both men and women;
- b. That the President of the Group, who is normally the Leader of the delegation and a member of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the First Vice-President, who is normally the second member of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, or their substitutes, shall automatically be members of the delegation;
- c. That members of the Canadian Group who have been elected to international-level positions within the Inter-Parliamentary Union shall be ex officio members of Canadian delegations to the IPU annual assemblies for the duration of their mandates. However, if the application of this rule prevents compliance with the limits imposed by Article 10 of the IPU Statutes as to the maximum number of national delegates authorized to attend annual assemblies and/or compliance with the representation of the political parties in both Houses as defined by the Executive Committee pursuant to Rule 10(3)(k), consideration shall be given to sending those parliamentarians in excess of the maximum as advisers to such delegations;
- d. That in the case of a member of the Canadian Group who is elected as a titular or substitute member of the IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and called to serve on this Committee during an annual assembly of the Union, that said member is automatically added as a supernumerary member to the Canadian delegation for that assembly;
- e. That there be an optimal mix of parliamentarians who are familiar with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, its standing committees as well as subjects under consideration, and others that are not;
- f. That the delegation include parliamentarians with an international reputation or who have recognized expertise in the fields on the meeting agenda;
- g. That the delegation includes parliamentarians who have distinguished themselves in previous IPU activities, by, for instance, drafting reports and resolutions, or in their work on drafting committees.

RULE 17

RULES OF PROCEDURE:

Meetings of the Group shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures and practices of the Parliament of Canada.

RULE 18

DECLARATIONS:

The President or any Officer of the Group, or any person nominated for the purpose by the President or the Vice-Presidents, is authorized and empowered to appear and make answer for the Group to all Writs, Orders, and Interrogatories upon articulated facts issued out of any Court.