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**Diplomatic Conference to Conclude an International Legal Instrument
Relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional
Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources**

Geneva, May 13 to 24, 2024

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE

as adopted on May 13, 2024 by the Diplomatic Conference

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE

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CHAPTER I: OBJECTIVE, COMPETENCE, COMPOSITION AND
SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE

Rule 1: Objective and Competence of the Conference

(1) The objective of the Diplomatic Conference to Conclude an International Legal Instrument Relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources (hereinafter referred to as “the Conference”) is to negotiate and adopt such an International Legal Instrument Relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources (hereinafter referred to as “the International Legal Instrument”), pursuant to the mandate contained in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) General Assembly document (WO/GA/55/12).

(2) The Conference, meeting in Plenary, shall be competent to:

- (i) adopt the Rules of Procedure of the Conference (hereinafter referred to as “these Rules”) and to make any amendments thereto;
- (ii) adopt the agenda of the Conference;
- (iii) decide on credentials, full powers, letters or other documents presented in accordance with Rules 6, 7 and 8 of these Rules;
- (iv) adopt the International Legal Instrument;
- (v) adopt any recommendation, resolution or agreed statement within the terms of the objective in paragraph (1);
- (vi) adopt any final act of the Conference;
- (vii) deal with all other matters referred to it by these Rules or appearing on its agenda.

Rule 2: Composition of the Conference

(1) The Conference shall consist of:

- (i) delegations of the States members of the World Intellectual Property Organization (hereinafter referred to as “the Member Delegations”),
- (ii) the delegation of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as “the Special Delegation”),
- (iii) the delegations of States members of the United Nations which are not members of the World Intellectual Property Organization (hereinafter referred to as “the Observer Delegations”), and
- (iv) representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others invited to the Conference as observers (hereinafter referred to as “the Observers”).

(2) References in these Rules of Procedure to “Member Delegations” shall be considered, except as otherwise provided (see Rules 11(2), 33 and 34), as references also to the Special Delegation.

(3) References in these Rules of Procedure to “Delegations” shall be considered as references to the three kinds (Member, Special and Observer) of Delegations but not to Observers.

Rule 3: Secretariat of the Conference

- (1) The Conference shall have a Secretariat provided by the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (hereinafter referred to as “the International Bureau” and “WIPO”, respectively).
- (2) The Director General of WIPO and any official of the International Bureau designated by the Director General of WIPO may participate in the discussions of the Conference, meeting in Plenary, as well as in any committee or working group thereof and may, at any time, make oral or written statements, observations or suggestions to the Conference, meeting in Plenary, and any committee or working group thereof concerning any question under consideration.
- (3) The Director General of WIPO shall, from among the staff of the International Bureau, designate the Secretary of the Conference and a Secretary for each committee and for each working group.
- (4) The Secretary of the Conference shall direct the staff required by the Conference.
- (5) The Secretariat shall provide for the receipt, translation, reproduction and distribution of the required documents, for the interpretation of oral interventions and for the performance of all other secretariat work required for the Conference.
- (6) The Director General of WIPO shall be responsible for the custody and preservation in the archives of WIPO of all documents of the Conference. The International Bureau shall distribute the final documents of the Conference after the closing of the Conference.

CHAPTER II: REPRESENTATION

Rule 4: Delegations

- (1) Each Delegation shall consist of one or more delegates and may include advisors.
- (2) Each Delegation shall have a Head of Delegation and may have a Deputy Head of Delegation.

Rule 5: Observers

An Observer may be represented by one or more representatives.

Rule 6: Credentials and Full Powers

- (1) Each Delegation shall present credentials. If a final act of the Conference (see Rule 1(2)(vi)) is adopted, it shall be open for signature by any Delegation whose credentials have been found in order under Rule 9(2).
- (2) Full powers shall be required for signing the International Legal Instrument. Such powers may be included in the credentials.

Rule 7: Letters of Appointment

The representatives of Observers shall present a letter or other document appointing them, signed by a competent authority.

Rule 8: Presentation of Credentials, etc.

The credentials and full powers referred to in Rule 6 and the letters or other documents referred to in Rule 7 shall be presented to the Secretary of the Conference, preferably not later than twenty-four hours after the opening of the Conference.

Rule 9: Examination of Credentials, etc.

(1) The Credentials Committee referred to in Rule 11 shall examine the credentials, full powers, letters or other documents referred to in Rules 6 and 7, respectively, and shall report to the Conference, meeting in Plenary.

(2) The decision on whether a credential, full powers, letter or other document is in order shall be made by the Conference, meeting in Plenary. Such decision shall be made as soon as possible and in any case before the adoption of the International Legal Instrument.

Rule 10: Provisional Participation

Pending a decision upon their credentials, letters or other documents of appointment, Delegations and Observers shall be entitled to participate provisionally in the deliberations of the Conference as provided in these Rules.

CHAPTER III: COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

Rule 11: Credentials Committee

(1) The Conference shall have a Credentials Committee.

(2) The Credentials Committee shall consist of seven Member Delegations elected by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, from among the Member Delegations, except that the Special Delegation shall not be eligible for membership in the Credentials Committee.

Rule 12: Main Committees and Their Working Groups

(1) The Conference shall have two Main Committees. Main Committee I shall be responsible for proposing for adoption by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, the substantive provisions of the International Legal Instrument, and any recommendation, resolution or agreed statement referred to in Rule 1(2)(v). Main Committee II shall be responsible for proposing for adoption by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, the administrative provisions and final clauses of the International Legal Instrument.

(2) Each Main Committee shall consist of all the Member Delegations.

(3) Each Main Committee may create working groups. In creating a working group, the Main Committee creating it shall specify the tasks of the working group, decide on the number of the members of the working group and elect such members from among the Member Delegations.

Rule 13: Drafting Committee

- (1) The Conference shall have a Drafting Committee.
- (2) The Drafting Committee shall consist of 17 elected members and two *ex officio* members. The elected members shall be elected by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, from among the Member Delegations. The Presidents of the two Main Committees shall be the *ex officio* members.
- (3) The Drafting Committee shall prepare drafts and give advice on drafting as requested by either Main Committee. The Drafting Committee shall not alter the substance of the texts submitted to it. It shall coordinate and review the drafting of all texts submitted to it by the Main Committees, and it shall submit the texts so reviewed for final approval to the competent Main Committee.

Rule 14: Steering Committee

- (1) The Conference shall have a Steering Committee.
- (2) The Steering Committee shall consist of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Conference, the President of the Credentials Committee, the Presidents of the Main Committees and the President of the Drafting Committee. The meetings of the Steering Committee shall be presided over by the President of the Conference.
- (3) The Steering Committee shall meet as necessary to review the progress of the Conference and to make decisions for furthering such progress, including, in particular, decisions on the coordination of the meetings of the Plenary, the Committees and the working groups.
- (4) The Steering Committee shall propose the text of any final act of the Conference (see Rule 1(2)(vi)), for adoption by the Conference, meeting in Plenary.

CHAPTER IV: OFFICERS

Rule 15: Officers and Their Election; Precedence Among Vice-Presidents

- (1) The Conference shall have a President and seven Vice-Presidents.
- (2) The Credentials Committee, each of the two Main Committees, and the Drafting Committee shall have a President and two Vice-Presidents, respectively.
- (3) Any working group shall have a President and two Vice-Presidents.
- (4) The Conference, meeting in Plenary, and presided over by the Director General of WIPO, shall elect its President, and, then, presided over by its President shall elect its Vice-Presidents and the officers of the Credentials Committee, each of the two Main Committees and the Drafting Committee.
- (5) The officers of a working group shall be elected by the Main Committee that establishes that working group.

(6) Precedence among the Vice-Presidents of a given body (the Conference, the Credentials Committee, the two Main Committees, any working group, the Drafting Committee) shall be determined, in the first instance, on the basis of agreement between them; in the absence of such agreement, it shall be determined by the place occupied by the name of the State of each of them in the list of Member Delegations established in the alphabetical order of the names of the States in French. The Vice-President of a given body who has precedence over all the other Vice-Presidents of that body shall be called “the ranking” Vice-President of that body.

Rule 16: Acting President

(1) If the President is absent from a meeting, the meeting shall be presided over, as Acting President, by the ranking Vice-President of that body.

(2) If all the officers of a body are absent from any meeting of the body concerned, that body shall elect an Acting President.

Rule 17: Replacement of the President

If the President becomes unable to perform his or her functions for the remainder of the duration of the Conference, a new President shall be elected.

Rule 18: Vote by the Presiding Officer

(1) No President, whether elected as such or acting (hereinafter referred to as “the Presiding Officer”), shall take part in voting. Another member of his or her Delegation may vote for that Delegation.

(2) Where the Presiding Officer is the only member of his or her Delegation, he or she may vote, but only in the last place.

CHAPTER V: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 19: Quorum

(1) A quorum shall be required in the Conference, meeting in Plenary; it shall, subject to paragraph (3), be constituted by one-half of the Member Delegations represented at the Conference.

(2) A quorum shall be required for the meetings of each Committee (the Credentials Committee, the two Main Committees, the Drafting Committee and the Steering Committee) and any working group; it shall be constituted by one-half of the members of the Committee or working group.

(3) The quorum at the time of the adoption of the International Legal Instrument by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, shall be constituted by one half of the Member Delegations whose credentials were found in order by the Conference meeting in Plenary.

Rule 20: General Powers of the Presiding Officer

(1) In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon Presiding Officers elsewhere by these Rules, the Presiding Officer shall declare the opening and closing of the meetings, direct the discussions, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, and announce decisions. The Presiding Officer shall rule on points of order and, subject to these Rules, shall have complete control of the proceedings at any meeting and over the maintenance of order thereat.

(2) The Presiding Officer may propose to the body over which he or she presides the limitation of time to be allowed to each speaker, the limitation of the number of times each Delegation may speak on any question, the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. The Presiding Officer may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting, or the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion. Such proposals of the Presiding Officer shall be considered as adopted unless immediately rejected.

Rule 21: Speeches

(1) No person may speak without having previously obtained the permission of the Presiding Officer. Subject to Rules 22 and 23, the Presiding Officer shall call upon persons in the order in which they ask for the floor.

(2) The Presiding Officer may call a speaker to order if the remarks of the speaker are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

Rule 22: Precedence in Receiving the Floor

(1) Member Delegations asking for the floor are generally given precedence over Observer Delegations asking for the floor, and, Member Delegations and Observer Delegations are generally given precedence over Observers, except as decided otherwise by the Presiding Officer.

(2) The President of a Committee or working group may be given precedence during discussions relating to the work of the Committee or working group concerned.

(3) The Director General of WIPO or his representative may be given precedence for making statements, observations or suggestions.

Rule 23: Points of Order

(1) During the discussion of any matter, any Member Delegation may raise a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the Presiding Officer in accordance with these Rules. Any Member Delegation may appeal against the ruling of the Presiding Officer. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote, and the Presiding Officer's ruling shall stand unless the appeal is approved.

(2) The Member Delegation that has raised a point of order under paragraph (1) may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 24: Limit on Speeches

In any meeting, the Presiding Officer may decide to limit the time allowed to each speaker and the number of times each Delegation and Observer may speak on any question. When the debate is limited and a Delegation or Observer has used up its allotted time, the Presiding Officer shall call it to order without delay.

Rule 25: Closing of List of Speakers

(1) During the discussion of any given question, the Presiding Officer may announce the list of participants who have asked for the floor and decide to close the list as to that question. The Presiding Officer may nevertheless accord the right of reply to any speaker if a speech, delivered after the list of speakers has been closed, makes it desirable.

(2) Any decision made by the Presiding Officer under paragraph (1) may be the subject of an appeal under Rule 23.

Rule 26: Adjournment or Closure of Debate

Any Member Delegation may at any time move the adjournment or closure of the debate on the question under discussion, whether or not any other participant has asked for the floor. In addition to the proposer of the motion to adjourn or close the debate, permission to speak on that motion shall be given only to one Member Delegation seconding and two Member Delegations opposing it, after which the motion shall immediately be put to the vote. The Presiding Officer may limit the time allowed to speakers under this Rule.

Rule 27: Suspension or Adjournment of the Meeting

During the discussion of any matter, any Member Delegation may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated, but shall immediately be put to the vote.

Rule 28: Order of Procedural Motions; Content of Interventions on Such Motions

(1) Subject to Rule 23, the following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting:

- (i) to suspend the meeting,
- (ii) to adjourn the meeting,
- (iii) to adjourn the debate on the question under discussion,
- (iv) to close the debate on the question under discussion.

(2) Any Member Delegation that has been given the floor on a procedural motion may speak on that motion only, and may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 29: Basic Proposal; Proposals for Amendment

(1) (a) Document GRATK/DC/3 shall constitute the basis of the discussions in the Conference, and the text of the draft International Legal Instrument contained in this document shall constitute the "Basic Proposal."

(b) Where, for any given provision of the draft International Legal Instrument there are two or more alternatives in the Basic Proposal, consisting of either two or more texts, or one or more texts and an alternative that there should be no such provision, all the different alternatives shall be designated with the letters A, B, etc., and shall have equal status. Discussions shall take place simultaneously on the alternatives and, if voting is necessary and there is no consensus on which alternative should be put to the vote first, each Member Delegation shall be invited to indicate its preference among the two or more alternatives. The alternative supported by more Member Delegations than the other one or more alternatives shall be put to the vote first.

(c) Wherever the Basic Proposal contains words within square brackets, only the text that is not within square brackets shall be regarded as part of the Basic Proposal, whereas words within square brackets shall be treated as a proposal for amendment if presented as provided in paragraph (2).

(2) Any Member Delegation may propose amendments to the Basic Proposal.

(3) Proposals for amendment shall, as a rule, be submitted in writing and transmitted to the Secretary of the body concerned. The Secretariat shall distribute copies to the Delegations and the Observers. As a general rule, a proposal for amendment cannot be taken into consideration and discussed or put to the vote at a meeting unless copies of it have been distributed not later than three hours before it is taken into consideration. The Presiding Officer may, however, permit the taking into consideration and discussion of a proposal for amendment even though copies of it have not been distributed or have been distributed less than three hours before it is taken into consideration.

Rule 30: Decisions on the Competence of the Conference

(1) If a Member Delegation moves that a duly seconded proposal should not be taken into consideration by the Conference because it is outside the latter's competence, that motion shall be decided upon by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, before the proposal is taken into consideration.

(2) If the motion referred to in paragraph (1), above, is made in a body other than the Conference, meeting in Plenary, it shall be referred to the Conference, meeting in Plenary, for a ruling.

Rule 31: Withdrawal of Procedural Motions and Proposals for Amendment

Any procedural motion and any proposal for amendment may be withdrawn by the Member Delegation that has made it, at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that no amendment to it has been proposed by another Member Delegation. Any motion or proposal thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any other Member Delegation.

Rule 32: Reconsideration of Matters Decided

When any matter has been decided by a body, it may not be reconsidered by that body unless so decided by the majority applicable under Rule 34(2)(ii). In addition to the proposer of the motion to reconsider, permission to speak on that motion shall be given only to one Member Delegation seconding and two Member Delegations opposing the motion, after which the motion shall immediately be put to the vote.

CHAPTER VI: VOTING

Rule 33: Right to Vote

(1) Each Member Delegation shall have the right to vote. A Member Delegation shall have one vote, may represent itself only and may vote in its name only.

(2) Subject to paragraph (3), the Special Delegation has no right to vote and, for the purposes of paragraph (1) of this Rule and Rule 34, the Special Delegation is not covered by the term "Member Delegations."

(3) The Special Delegation may, under the authority of the intergovernmental organization it represents, exercise the rights to vote of the Member States of the intergovernmental organization that are represented at the Diplomatic Conference, provided that

- (i) the Special Delegation shall not exercise the rights to vote of the Member States of the intergovernmental organization it represents if the Member States exercise their rights to vote and vice versa, and

- (ii) the number of votes cast by the Special Delegation shall in no case exceed the number of Member States of the intergovernmental organization it represents that are represented at the Diplomatic Conference and that are present at and entitled to participate in the vote.

Rule 34: Required Majorities

- (1) All decisions of all bodies shall be made as far as possible by consensus.
- (2) If it is not possible to attain consensus, the following decisions shall require a majority of two-thirds of the Member Delegations present and voting:
 - (i) adoption by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, of these Rules, and, once adopted, any amendment to them,
 - (ii) decision by any of the bodies to reconsider, under Rule 32, a matter decided,
 - (iii) adoption by the Conference, meeting in Plenary, of the International Legal Instrument,

whereas all other decisions of all bodies shall require a simple majority of the Member Delegations present and voting.

- (3) "Voting" means casting an affirmative or negative vote; express abstention or non-voting shall not be counted.

Rule 35: Requirement of Seconding; Method of Voting

- (1) Any proposal for amendment made by a Member Delegation shall be put to a vote only if seconded by at least one other Member Delegation.
- (2) Voting on any question shall be by show of hands unless a Member Delegation, seconded by at least one other Member Delegation, requests a roll-call, in which case it shall be by roll-call. The roll shall be called in the alphabetical order of the names in French of the States, beginning with the Member Delegation whose name shall have been drawn by lot by the Presiding Officer.

Rule 36: Conduct During Voting

- (1) After the Presiding Officer has announced the beginning of voting, the voting shall not be interrupted except on a point of order concerning the actual conduct of the voting.
- (2) The Presiding Officer may permit a Member Delegation to explain its vote or its abstention, either before or after the voting.

Rule 37: Division of Proposals

Any Member Delegation may move that parts of the Basic Proposal or of any proposal for amendment be voted upon separately. If the request for division is objected to, the motion for division shall be put to a vote. In addition to the proposer of the motion for division, permission to speak on that motion shall be given only to one Member Delegation seconding and two Member Delegations opposing it. If the motion for division is carried, all parts of the Basic Proposal or of the proposal for amendment that have been separately approved shall again be put to the vote, together, as a whole. If all operative parts of the Basic Proposal or of the proposal for amendment have been rejected, the Basic Proposal or the proposal for amendment shall be considered rejected as a whole.

Rule 38: Voting on Proposals for Amendment

(1) Any proposal for amendment shall be voted upon before the text to which it relates is voted upon.

(2) Proposals for amendment relating to the same text shall be put to the vote in the order of their substantive remoteness from the said text, the most remote being put to the vote first and the least remote being put to the vote last. If, however, the adoption of any proposal for amendment necessarily implies the rejection of any other proposal for amendment or of the original text, such other proposal or text shall not be put to the vote.

(3) If one or more proposals for amendment relating to the same text are adopted, the text as amended shall be put to the vote.

(4) Any proposal the purpose of which is to add to or delete from a text shall be considered a proposal for amendment.

Rule 39: Voting on Proposals for Amendment on the Same Question

Subject to Rule 38, where two or more proposals relate to the same question, they shall be put to the vote in the order in which they have been submitted, unless the body concerned decides on a different order.

Rule 40: Equally Divided Votes

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), if a vote is equally divided on a matter that calls only for a simple majority, the proposal shall be considered rejected.

(2) If a vote is equally divided on a proposal for electing a given person to a given position as officer and the nomination is maintained, the vote shall be repeated, until either that nomination is adopted or rejected or another person is elected for the position in question.

CHAPTER VII: LANGUAGES AND MINUTES

Rule 41: Languages of Oral Interventions

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), oral interventions made in the meetings of any of the bodies shall be in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian or Spanish, and interpretation shall be provided by the Secretariat into Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

(2) Any of the Committees and any working group may, if none of its members objects, decide to dispense with interpretation or to limit interpretation to some only of the languages that are referred to in paragraph (1).

Rule 42: Summary Minutes

(1) Provisional summary minutes of the meetings of the Conference, meeting in Plenary, and of the Main Committees shall be drawn up by the International Bureau and shall be made available as soon as possible after the closing of the Conference to all speakers, who shall, within two months after the minutes have been made available, inform the International Bureau of any suggestions for changes in the minutes of their own interventions.

(2) The final summary minutes shall be published in due course by the International Bureau.

Rule 43: Languages of Documents and Summary Minutes

(1) Any written proposal shall be presented to the Secretariat in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish. Such proposal shall be distributed by the Secretariat in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

(2) Reports of the Committees and any working group, as well as information documents of the Secretariat, shall be distributed in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

(3) (a) Provisional summary minutes shall be drawn up in the language used by the speaker if the speaker has used English, French or Spanish; if the speaker has used another language, the intervention shall be rendered in English or French at the choice of the International Bureau.

(b) The final summary minutes shall be made available in English, French and Spanish and, whenever practicable, also in Arabic, Chinese, and Russian.

CHAPTER VIII: OPEN AND CLOSED MEETINGS

Rule 44: Meetings of the Conference and of the Main Committees

The meetings of the Conference, meeting in Plenary, and of the Main Committees shall be open to the public unless the Conference, meeting in Plenary, or the interested Main Committee, decides otherwise.

Rule 45: Meetings of Other Committees and of Working Groups

The meetings of the Credentials Committee, the Drafting Committee, the Steering Committee and, subject to Rule 46(4), of any working group shall be open only to the members of the Committee or the working group concerned and to the Secretariat.

CHAPTER IX: OBSERVER DELEGATIONS AND OBSERVERS

Rule 46: Status of Observers

(1) Observer Delegations may attend and make oral statements in the Plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of the Main Committees.

(2) Observers may attend the Plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of the Main Committees. Upon the invitation of the Presiding Officer, they may make oral statements in those meetings on questions within the scope of their activities and that are directly relevant to the work of the Conference.

(3) Written statements submitted by Observer Delegations or by Observers on subjects for which they have a special competence and which are related to the work of the Conference shall be distributed by the Secretariat to the participants in the quantities and in the languages in which the written statements were made available to it.

(4) With respect to the participation of Observers, the Presiding Officer shall take into account the measures applied to Observers in the context of the work of the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore and which shall be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the work of the relevant Committee or any working group.

CHAPTER X: AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rule 47: Possibility of Amending the Rules of Procedure

With the exception of the present Rule, these Rules may be amended by the Conference, meeting in Plenary.

CHAPTER XI: FINAL ACT

Rule 48: Signing of the Final Act

If a final act is adopted, it shall be open for signature by any Delegation.

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