

## First session of the Executive Board in 2020

### Note on election of officers to the new Bureau of the Executive Board (2020-2021) – version 29 May 2020

#### Rules of procedure of the Executive Board

- a) Under Agenda item 6 of the revised provisional Agenda for the session and in accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure, the Executive Board is expected to elect from among its members a new Bureau comprising a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, to hold office starting at the end of the first session of the year 2020. In line with rule 9, the current offices of Chair and Rapporteur are to rotate to a different regional group. It being understood that this session is a virtual session and so elections would be conducted virtually.
- b) The Rules of Procedure of the Board on elections provide in Rule 9 as follows: (1) “The Executive Board shall, at its first regular session each year, elect from among its members, taking into consideration the need to ensure equitable geographical representation, a Bureau comprising a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, who shall hold office until their successors are elected. (2). They shall, subject to the provisions herein, be eligible for re-election. (3) The offices of Chair and Rapporteur shall rotate each year to a different regional group. Each regional group shall occupy the office of Chair and Rapporteur once during a period of five years.”
- c) The Bureau will be elected from the five regional groups; i.e. the African Group, the Asia-Pacific Group, the Eastern European Group, Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) and the Western European and Others Group (WEOG).
- d) The normal practice is that the regional groups agree by consensus who the candidates are from their group for a seat on the Bureau. In addition, all the regional groups should agree on the candidate for Chair which is usually rotational.
- e) Once agreement is reached amongst the regional groups, the following procedure should be followed in the case of both an in-person and virtual session: The presiding officer of the meeting of the Executive Board, i.e. the current Chair/Acting Chair or a representative of the Secretariat would propose the five names of the Member States for the Bureau, with their functions (i.e. Chair, Vice Chair and Rapporteur) and present them as an “agreed slate” whereupon the five Member States would be elected by acclamation, that would constitute a Decision of the Executive Board.
- f) In the event that there is no agreement, then it is usually because (i) a regional group is unable to reach agreement on its candidate(s) for the Bureau or (ii) where a member of the Board opposes the candidature of a Member State that has been proposed by its regional group. In such a case, the Executive Board will (i) either postpone the election of a particular candidate until agreement is reached or (i) conduct an election for those candidates for whom there is no agreement.
- g) In the event of a postponement, the specific seat on the Bureau for which election could not be held, will remain vacant until there is agreement on the candidate and there is an election, including by acclamation or by ballot.
- h) However, it would be possible for a new Bureau to meet, even though there are vacancies, provided that quorum is met. As the rules of procedure of the Executive Board do not contain a rule on quorum, the rule contained in the rules of procedure of the UN Habitat Assembly would apply *mutatis mutandis*. Specifically, Rule 39 that provides that: “The President may declare a meeting of the UN-Habitat Assembly open and permit the debate to proceed when representatives of at least one third of the members of the Assembly are present. The presence of representatives of a majority of the members of the Assembly shall,

however, be required for any decision to be taken.” Consequently, in terms of the practice of the United Nations the presence of a majority of members of a Bureau are required at Bureau meetings for that Bureau to be able to conduct its work.

- i) The new Bureau may wish to invite the Chair of the regional group who is unable to agree on its candidate to attend Bureau meetings as an Observer until its member of the Bureau is elected.
- j) Should the Executive Board wish to conduct an election for those candidates for which there is no agreement, then the Secretariat remains at the disposal of the Board to advise on the conduct of such an election, whether virtually or in-person.

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