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ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

First Meeting of the General Assembly of the
Association of African Trade Promotion
Organizations

Tangier, 2 - 6 September 1974

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSOCIATION
OF AFRICAN TRADE PROMOTION ORGANIZATIONS

(Submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Association of African Trade
Promotion Organizations to the General Assembly)

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PREAMBLE

In exercise of the powers conferred by paragraph 2 and 4(f) of Article VII of the Constitution of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations, the following Rules are hereby made:

I. SESSIONS

DATE AND PLACE OF SESSIONS

Rule 1

Sessions of the General Assembly shall be held in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article VII of the Constitution of the Association.

- (a) Ordinary sessions at a date recommended by the General Assembly at a previous session after consultation with the Secretary-General;
- (b) Extraordinary sessions at the request of two-thirds majority of the members of the Association after consultation with the Secretary-General.

Rule 2

- (a) Each session convened in pursuance of sub-paragraph (a) of 1 of these Rules shall be held at a place decided upon by the General Assembly at a previous session, due consideration being given to the principle that the General Assembly may meet at the headquarters of the Association or in the different member States of the Association.
- (b) Sessions convened in pursuance of sub-paragraph (b) of rule 1 of the Rules shall be held at a place determined by the Secretary-General in consultation with the President of the General Assembly.

NOTIFICATION OF DATE OF OPENING

Rule 3

The Secretary-General shall notify the member States of the Association of the date and place of the meeting of each session at least sixty days in the case of a regular session and not exceeding thirty days in the case of an emergency session before the commencement of such session. Such notification shall also be made to the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity and such other bodies or organizations operating in the same field as the Association and with which liaison has been established by the Association.

II. AGENDA

DRAWING UP AND COMMUNICATION OF PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Rule 4

The provisional agenda for each session shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General in consultation with the President of the General Assembly and shall be communicated in three copies, together with the basic documents relating to each item, to the member States of the Association and to the organs and organizations referred to in rule 3 of these Rules not later than sixty days in the case of the ordinary session and thirty days in the case of an extraordinary session prior to the opening of such session.

Rule 5

The provisional agenda shall include items proposed by:

- (a) The General Assembly at a previous session and its Bureau;
- (b) The Sub-regional Conferences;
- (c) Any member State of the Association;
- (d) The Secretary-General
- (e) The Secretariats of ECA and OAU.

REVISION OF THE AGENDA

Rule 6

After the agenda has been adopted, the General Assembly may at any time revise it. In the event that a member State of the Association does not receive the reports, studies and documents to be considered during a session sixty days in advance, its representative shall have the right to request that the items to which those reports, studies and documents refer should be excluded from the agenda, and the General Assembly shall discuss such a request.

III. REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Rule 7

Each member State of the Association shall be represented in the General Assembly by an accredited leader of the delegation. And such leader of delegation may be accompanied to the sessions of the General Assembly by alternate representatives and advisors and, when absent, he may be replaced by an alternate representative.

Rule 8

The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the Secretary-General before the meeting which the representatives are to attend. The Secretary-General shall examine the credentials and submit his report to the President of the General Assembly. This rule shall not, however, prevent a member State of the Association from changing its representatives, alternate representative or advisers subsequently, subject to proper submission and examination of credentials, where needed.

IV. OFFICERS

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS AND RAPPORTEUR

Rule 9

The General Assembly shall, at the commencement of each regular session elect its President, two Vice-Presidents and one Rapporteur, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 of Article VII of the Constitution of the Association. The President shall preside at all sessions of the General Assembly.

TERMS OF OFFICE

Rule 10

The officers of the General Assembly shall hold office for two years. They shall be eligible for re-election.

ACTING PRESIDENT

Rule 11

If the President of the General Assembly is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, a Vice-President shall preside. A Vice-President acting as President shall have the same powers and duties as the President.

REPLACEMENT OF PRESIDENT

Rule 12

If the President ceases to represent a member State of the Association or is for any other reason unable to hold office, a Vice-President elected for this purpose by the General Assembly shall become President of the General Assembly for the unexpired portion of the term. If such Vice-President also ceases to represent a member State of the Association or is for any other reason unable to hold office, the other Vice-President shall become President of the General Assembly for the unexpired portion of the term.

VOTING RIGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT

Rule 13

The President or a Vice-President acting as President shall participate in the meetings of the General Assembly in that capacity and not as the representative of the member State of the Association by whom he is accredited. In such cases an alternate representative shall be entitled to represent the member State of the Association concerned in the meeting of the General Assembly and exercise the right to vote.

V. COMMITTEES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rule 14

At each session, the General Assembly may set up such committees of the whole or committees of limited membership as it deems necessary and refer to them any questions of the agenda for study and report. The General Assembly may, in consultation with the Secretary-General, authorize such committees to meet while the General Assembly is not in session.

Rule 15

The member of committees of the General Assembly shall be selected by the General Assembly from among its members present at a session.

Rule 16

These Rules shall also apply to the proceedings of committees of the General Assembly and such other subsidiary bodies of the Association as are established under the provisions of paragraph 2(e) of Article V of the Constitution of the Association unless the General Assembly decides otherwise.

VI. SECRETARY-GENERAL

Rule 17

The Secretary-General shall act in that capacity at all meetings of the General Assembly, its committees and subsidiary bodies. He may designate another member of the secretariat to take his place at any meeting, and shall be responsible for keeping the members of the General Assembly informed of any questions which may be brought before it for consideration.

Rule 18

At the beginning of each ordinary session of the General Assembly the Secretary-General shall present a progress report on the work programme of the secretariat during the periods between ordinary sessions. The Secretary-General shall see that in so far as is possible members States of the Association are informed of the activities of the Association and any comments made on them by a member State of the Association.

Rule 19

The Secretary-General or his representative may make oral or written statements to the General Assembly, its committees and subsidiary bodies concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 20

The Secretary-General shall be responsible for all the necessary arrangements for sessions of the General Assembly, its committees and its subsidiary bodies. Under his direction, the secretariat shall interpret speeches made at sessions, shall receive, translate and circulate the documents of the General Assembly, its committees and subsidiary bodies; shall publish and circulate the records of the session, the resolutions of the General Assembly and all relevant documents. It shall have the custody of the documents in the archives of the Association.

VII. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AND INTERPRETATION

Rule 21

- (a) English and French shall be the official languages of the Association.

- (b) Speeches made in any of the official languages shall be interpreted into the other official language.
- (c) Any representative may make a speech in a language other than the official languages of the Association. In this case, he shall himself provide for the interpretation into one of the official languages.

VIII. PUBLIC AND CLOSED SESSIONS

Rule 22

- (a) Sessions of the General Assembly shall be held in public unless the General Assembly decides otherwise.
- (b) At the close of each closed session the President of the General Assembly may issue a communiqué through the Secretary-General.

IX. RECORDS

SUMMARY RECORDS OF PUBLIC SESSIONS

Rule 23

The adopted version of the Reports of public sessions, resolutions recommendations and other formal decisions of the General Assembly, and its subsidiary organs shall be distributed as soon as possible to all member States of the Association, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity and such other bodies or organizations operating in the same field as the Association and with which liaison has been established by the Association, and to any other persons admitted to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly.

REPORT OF CLOSED SESSIONS

Rule 24

The reports of closed sessions of the General Assembly shall be distributed as soon as possible to the member States of the Association, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity and to any other person who may have participated in such closed session. Such reports shall be made public at such time and under such conditions as the General Assembly may decide.

X. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

QUORUM

Rule 25

A simple majority of the members of the General Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT

Rule 26

- (a) In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him elsewhere by these Rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the General Assembly, shall direct the discussion, ensure the observance of these Rules, and shall accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, and announce decisions. The President, subject to these Rules, shall have control of the proceedings of the General Assembly and over the maintenance of order at its Sessions. He shall rule on points of order and shall have, in particular, the power to propose adjournment or closure of the debate or adjournment or suspension of a session.
- (b) Debate shall be confined to the question before the General Assembly and the President may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

POINTS OF ORDER

Rule 27

- (a) During the discussion of any matter a representative may at any time raise a point of order and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the President in accordance with these Rules. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President. The appeal shall immediately be put to the vote and the ruling of the President shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the members present and voting.
- (b) A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

TIME-LIMIT ON SPEECHES

Rule 28

The President may limit the time allowed to each speaker and the number of times each representative may speak on any questions, except on procedural questions, when the President shall limit each intervention to a maximum of five minutes. When debate is limited and a representative exceeds his allotted time, the President shall call him to order without delay.

CLOSING OF LIST OF SPEAKERS

Rule 29

During the course of a debate the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the General Assembly, declare the list closed. The President may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if, in his opinion, a speech delivered after he has declared the list closed makes this desirable. When the debate on an item is concluded because there are no other speakers, the President shall declare the debate closed. Such closure shall have the same effect as closure by the consent of the General Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSURE OF DEBATE

Rule 30

- (a) During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one representative may speak in favour of and one ~~against~~ the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote, unless agreed by acclamation.
- (b) A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the item under discussion, whether or not any other representative has signified his wish to speak. Permission to speak on the closure of the debate shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote.

SUSPENSION OR ADJOURNMENT OF THE SESSION

Rule 31

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the suspension or the adjournment of the session. No discussion on such motions shall be permitted, and they shall be immediately put to the vote.

ORDER OF PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Rule 32

Subject to rule 30 of these Rules the following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting:

- (1) To suspend the session;
- (2) To adjourn the session;
- (3) To adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;
- (4) For the closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

SUBMISSION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND SUBSTANTIVE AMENDMENTS OR MOTIONS

Rule 33

- (a) Draft resolution shall be introduced in writing and handed to the Secretary-General who shall circulate copies to representatives at least twenty-four hours before they are discussed and voted upon, unless the General Assembly decides otherwise.
- (b) Upon request of any representative of a member State of the Association the text of any proposal or amendment thereto made by a representative of another member State of the Association shall be handed over to the President in writing and shall be read by him before any further speaker is called upon, and also immediately before a vote is taken on such a proposal or amendment. The President may direct that any proposal or amendment be circulated to the representatives present before a vote is taken. This rule shall not apply to procedural motions such as those referred to in rule 30 of these Rules.

DECISION ON COMPETENCE

Rule 34

Subject to rule 30 of these Rules any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the General Assembly to adopt a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote immediately before a vote is taken on the proposal in question.

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTIONS

Rule 35

A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended. A motion which has thus been withdrawn may be reintroduced by a representative.

XI. VOTING

VOTING RIGHTS AND METHOD OF VOTING

Rule 36

- (a) In accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 Article III of the Constitution of the Association each member State of the Association shall have one vote.
- (b) Decisions of the General Assembly shall be made by a simple majority of the members present and voting.
- (c) For the purpose of these Rules, the phrase "members present and voting" means members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.
- (d) The General Assembly shall normally vote by show of hands, except that any member may request a roll-call, which shall then be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the member States of the Association. The vote of each member participating in any roll-call shall be inserted in the record.

EQUALLY DIVIDED VOTES

Rule 37

If a vote is equally divided on matters other than election, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

XII. REPORTS

Rule 38

The Secretary-General shall submit to the General Assembly an annual report on its activities and plans, including those of its subsidiary bodies. For those years during which the General Assembly does not hold a session, the report, approved by the President, shall be circulated to the member States of the Association, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity and such other bodies or organizations operating in the same field as the Association and with which liaison has been established by the Association.

XIII. PARTICIPATION OF OTHER STATES AND CONSULTATION WITH SPECIALIZED AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Rule 39

The General Assembly may invite any member State of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa or Organization of African Unity, not a member State of the Association, to participate in its deliberations on any matter which the General Assembly considers is of particular concern to that member State. Any member State thus invited shall not have the right to vote but may submit proposals which may be put to the vote at the request of any member State of the Association.

Rule 40

In accordance with the agreements concluded between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, any specialized agency dealing with matters of interest to the Association may be invited to be represented at sessions of the General Assembly and its committees, to participate through their representatives in the deliberations with respect to items relating to matters within the scope of their activities, and to submit proposals regarding such items, which may be put to the vote on the request of any member State of the Association or the committees concerned.

XIV. AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS OF RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rule 41

- (a) Any of these Rules may be amended or suspended by the General Assembly by a simple majority vote of the members' present and voting.
- (b) These Rules may not be amended until the General Assembly has received the report on the proposed amendments from a committee of the General Assembly set up for that purpose.
- (c) Any of these Rules may be suspended by the General Assembly provided that twenty-four hours' notice of the proposal for the suspension has been given. The notice may be waived if no member objects.