

Standing Orders of the Defence and Security Commission

SECTION I

Organisation and Powers of the Defence and Security Commission

Article 1 :

In accordance with the provisions of Article 13 of the Protocol relating to the COPAX , the Defence and Security Commission is an advisory organ consisting of :

- **Chiefs of Staff of Armed Forces or their representatives**
- **Chiefs of Police or their representatives ;**
- **Experts from Ministries of Foreign Affairs/External Relations ;**
- **Experts from Ministries of Defence/Armed Forces ;**
- **Experts from Ministries of the Interior/Security ;**
- **Experts from other Ministries invited in view of the agendas of the Commission.**

Article 2 :

The organisation and powers of the Defence and Security Commission are provided for in Articles 14 to 18 of the Protocol relating to COPAX.

SECTION II

Mode of Operation of the Defence and Security Commission

Article 3 :

The meetings of the Defence and Security Commission shall be convened by the serving Chairman of the Conference of Heads of State and Government or, if need be, by the serving Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

The meetings of the Defence and Security Commission shall be held in the State which ensures the serving chairmanship or in any other member State, if circumstances so require.

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Article 4 :

Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 17 of the Protocol relating to the Central African Council of Peace and Security, the Commission shall meet in ordinary sessions twice a **year**, and in extraordinary sessions if circumstances so require.

Written notifications to attend shall be sent by the COPAX Secretariat thirty days before the opening of any ordinary session.

In the case of extraordinary **sessions**, such notifications shall be sent to States in accordance with emergency diplomatic procedures, by the serving Chairman of the Conference of Heads of State and Government or the serving Chairman of the Council of Ministers, if possible within seven days.

Article 5 :

The secretarial services of the Commission's sessions shall be provided by the COPAX Secretariat in accordance with Article 19, subparagraph 2 of the Protocol relating to COPAX.

The Commission may sit within the framework of technical committees set up for that purpose.

Article 6 :

During sessions, the Commission may if need be have recourse to expertise from partners outside the **sub-region**, in the context of the duties assigned to it under Article 14 of the Protocol relating to the Central African Council of Peace and Security.

Foreign partners may send written messages to the Commission, with the consent of the General Secretariat.

Article 7 :

Each Member **State's** delegation taking part in the work of the Defence and Security Commission must have credentials.

Both credentials and full credentials shall be transmitted to the Secretariat before the opening of sessions.

Article 8 :

A commission on credentials shall examine credentials; full credentials, letters or other documents referred to in Article 7 and shall report to the COPAX Secretariat.

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Article 9 :

The provisional agenda of each ordinary session shall be set by the serving Chairman of the Conference of Heads of State and Government and appended to the notification to be transmitted in accordance with Article 4, Paragraph 2.

Article 10 :

The Bureau of the Defence and Security Commission shall comprise :

- one **Chairman** ;
- one **Vice-Chairman** ;
- two Rapporteurs.

Article 11 :

- 1- Where the Chairman is absent from a session of the Commission, such session shall be presided over by the Vice-Chairman who shall deputize for him.
- 2- Where the Chairman is unable to fulfill his duties during the rest of the session, the **Vice-Chairman** shall become Chairman and a new Vice-Chairman shall be elected.

Article 12 :

- 1- No titular or acting Chairman shall take part in votes. Another member of his delegation shall vote on behalf of the delegation.
- 2- Where the Chairman is the only member of his **delegation**, he may vote but he shall be the last voter.

Article 13 :

A quorum of seven Member States shall be needed for the plenary sessions of the Commission, in accordance with the Treaty of ECCAS.

Article 14 :

The chairman shall exercise the powers conferred on him under these Standing Orders, as well as he shall open and close session, direct discussions, give the floor, put issues to the vote and announce decisions. He shall rule on points of order and, subject to these Standing Orders, he shall settle deliberations and maintain order.

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Article 15 :

All delegations from Member States shall have the right to vote.
Each of them shall have one **vote**, must not represent anyone but itself and must not vote unless for itself.

Article 16 :

- 1- All decisions shall be taken by consensus, as far as possible ;
- 2- Where there is no way to reach a **consensus**, the following decisions shall need a two-third majority of delegations of Member States which are present and taking part in the vote :
 - I) Adoption of these standing orders or, when they are already adopted, the adoption of any amendment **thereto** ;
 - II) Opinion of any technical committee, which examined an issue on which the Defence and Security Commission made a decision under Article 5, subparagraph 2 above.
3. « Taking part in vote » shall mean to express a positive or negative vote.

Deliberate abstentions or non-participation in votes shall not be taken into consideration.

Article 17 :

Votes on any issue shall be by a show of hands, unless a delegation from a Member State, supported at least by another Member **State's delegation**, requests that a vote by call-over should take place.

In such **case**, the vote shall be by call-over.

Article 18 :

1. Where the Chairman of the session has announced the beginning of the vote, nobody shall interrupt **it**, unless he raises a point of procedure.
2. The Chairman may allow a delegation from a Member State to justify its vote or its **abstention**, either before or after the vote.

Article 19 :

- 1- Any amendment proposal shall be put to the vote before the vote of the text to which it relates is voted.
- 2- Where one or several amendment proposals relating to the same text are adopted, the text so amended shall be put to the vote.

Article 20 :

In the event of a tie in the vote after a vote on an issue, which needs only a simple majority, the proposal shall be considered as rejected.

Article 21 :

Oral interventions during sessions shall be in one of the official languages of ECCAS and their translation into other languages shall be ensured by the Secretariat.

SECTION III***Sundry and Final Provisions*****Article 22 :**

The Commission's legal texts shall be kept by the General Secretariat of ECCAS.

Article 23 :

These Standing Orders may be modified by the Conference at the request of any Member State.

They shall take effect from their date of signature and shall be published in the Official Journal of the Community in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

Done at Malabo on 17 June 2002.