



# Rules of Procedure of the Committee of Ministers (7<sup>th</sup> revised edition: 2025)<sup>1</sup>

COMMITTEE  
OF MINISTERS  
COMITÉ  
DES MINISTRES



<sup>1</sup> European Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (2025), *Rules of Procedure of the Committee of Ministers*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

*Article 1<sup>2</sup>*

- a. The Committee of Ministers shall be in session during the days immediately preceding and following the opening of the session of the Consultative Assembly.<sup>3</sup> The Committee shall meet again as soon after the end of the session of the Assembly as it shall deem expedient.
- b. If any of the members or the Secretary General so request, the Committee may decide to meet in session at other times. If the Committee is not in session, the request shall be communicated by the Secretary General to the members, and a decision in favour of holding a session shall be regarded as taken by the majority required under Article 20.d of the Statute if two-thirds of the members inform the Secretary General of their agreement.
- c. In case of exceptional circumstances,<sup>4</sup> where such circumstances impede member State representatives (ministers or their representatives) from convening in a single location, a session of the Committee of Ministers may be held in private by videoconference, in its entirety or in part. Remote attendance of member States' representatives at a session of the Committee of Ministers shall be treated as presence in person for the purposes of the Statute and of the Rules of Procedure, for all proceedings such as quorum, participation in discussions and voting. In sessions held by videoconference, voting, if any, should take place by electronic means only.

The proposal to hold a session by videoconference shall be made by the President<sup>5</sup> of the Committee of Ministers or by the Secretary General, in accordance with the Statute of the Council of Europe and the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of Ministers.

*Article 2*

The President shall, after consulting the representatives on the Committee, fix the exact date for the opening of each session, and the Secretary General shall notify it to members.

*Article 3*

When a session of the Committee has been arranged in accordance with the provisions of Articles 1.b and 2, any request for postponement shall be made at least fifteen days before the date fixed for the opening of the session; a decision in favour of postponing the session shall be regarded as taken by the majority required under Article 20.d of the Statute if two-thirds of the members inform the Secretary General of their agreement at least seven days before the date originally fixed.

*Article 4<sup>6</sup>*

- a. For each session of the Committee the Secretary General shall draw up a provisional agenda, which he or she shall transmit to members.
- b. This provisional agenda, which shall be given preliminary examination by the Deputies, shall include:
- i. Any resolutions of the Consultative Assembly<sup>[3]</sup> of the kind mentioned in Article 29, paragraphs i, iii and iv of the Statute;
  - ii. Questions, including any draft resolutions, put forward for consideration by a member or by the Secretary General;
  - iii. Intimation of the date and place of the next session of the Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Amended by the Ministers' Deputies at their 1388<sup>th</sup> meeting.

<sup>3</sup> In February 1994, the Committee of Ministers decided to use in the future the denomination "Parliamentary Assembly" (508<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies).

<sup>4</sup> The occurrence of an exceptional, unforeseeable event beyond the member States' control which prevents the adherence to the rules applicable under regular circumstances. Examples include, but are not limited to natural disasters, major weather problems, wars and pandemics.

<sup>5</sup> In July 2025, the Committee of Ministers agreed to replace the term "Chairmanship" by the term "Presidency" and the term "Chairman" by the term "President" (1534<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies).

<sup>6</sup> Amended by the Committee of Ministers at its 23<sup>rd</sup> Session and by the Ministers' Deputies at their 133<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

*Article 5*

The agenda shall be adopted by the Committee at the beginning of the session.

*Article 6<sup>7</sup>*

Subject to Articles 7 and 8 below, the President of the Committee of Ministers shall be held for a six-month term in turn by the representatives of the members in English alphabetical order. The Presidency shall pass to a new Presidency mid-May and mid-November, at a date to be fixed by the Committee of Ministers based on a joint proposal by the incoming and outgoing Presidents.

*Article 7*

- a. During the session the President may be replaced as such by another member of his or her government.
- b. If and as long as the place of the foreign minister entitled to take the Presidency is taken by an alternate, under the provisions of Article 10, who is not a member of his or her government, the Presidency shall pass to that representative, being a member of his or her government, who would be taking the Presidency next in the order mentioned in the preceding article.

*Article 8*

If the foreign minister who is entitled to take the Presidency at a certain session waives this right, the Presidency shall not revert to him or her at a subsequent session but shall pass on in the order mentioned in Article 6.

*Article 9*

- a. The President shall guide the discussions, put proposals to the vote and announce decisions.
- b. He or she may speak and vote, but shall have no casting vote.

*Article 10*

When a Minister for Foreign Affairs wishes to be replaced by an alternate, in accordance with Article 14 of the Statute, he or she shall inform the Secretary General of the name and office of his or her alternate.

*Article 11*

There shall be a quorum if two-thirds of the representatives of the members are present.

*Article 12*

- a. English and French shall be the official languages of the Committee.
- b. A representative may speak in any other language, but in that case he or she shall provide for interpretation into one of the official languages.

*Article 13*

Any proposal for a resolution must be submitted in writing if any representative so requests. In that case the President shall not put the proposal to the vote until it has been circulated.

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<sup>7</sup> Amended by the Ministers' Deputies at their 934<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*Article 14<sup>8</sup>*

- a. Each representative on the Committee of Ministers appoints a Deputy to act on his or her behalf when the Committee is not in session. The Deputies meet for the purpose of transacting business and recording decisions on behalf of the Committee of Ministers.
- b. The way in which the Deputies' powers shall be exercised and the procedure for their meetings shall be determined by their own Rules of Procedure.

*Article 15*

Where a recommendation of the Consultative Assembly<sup>[3]</sup> is only partially acceptable to the Committee of Ministers, the latter shall refer it back to the President of the Assembly for further consideration and shall at the same time append its comments.

*Article 16*

Written questions submitted by Representatives to the Assembly in pursuance of the Rules of Procedure of the Consultative Assembly<sup>[3]</sup> shall first be examined by the Ministers' Deputies, meeting immediately before the sessions of the Committee of Ministers. The Deputies shall then determine which questions shall be included in the agenda of the Committee of Ministers and shall decide what other action should be taken.

*Article 17<sup>[7]</sup>*

- a. The Committee of Ministers may authorise one or more of the representatives on the Committee or any other Minister of a member government to make a statement to the Consultative Assembly<sup>[3]</sup> presenting its view on any matter, whether or not it is on the agenda of the Assembly.
- b. The representative, representatives or other Minister chosen shall limit themselves to statements previously approved by the Committee, unless the Committee authorises him or her, or them, to take part in the debates in the Assembly on the matter in question.
- c. The President of the Assembly and the President of the Committee of Ministers shall settle the date on which the representatives of the Committee shall be heard by the Assembly.

*Article 18<sup>9</sup>*

Any representative on the Committee, being a member of the government which he or she represents, or any other minister of a member government, may speak in the Consultative Assembly<sup>[3]</sup>, as an individual and in his or her own name, on any items on the agenda of the Assembly, after obtaining the agreement of the President of the Assembly as to the date on which he or she shall be heard.

*Article 19<sup>10</sup>*

The Secretary General shall be present at meetings of the Committee, except during the discussion of any particular question when the Committee has decided otherwise, and shall take part in the debates in an advisory capacity.

*Article 20*

The Secretary General shall prepare a list of the decisions taken by the Committee and distribute it to members.

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<sup>8</sup> Amended by the Committee of Ministers at its 10<sup>th</sup> Session.

<sup>9</sup> Amended by the Committee of Ministers at its 16<sup>th</sup> Session.

<sup>10</sup> Amended by the Committee of Ministers at its 23<sup>rd</sup> Session.

*Article 21*

- a. The Secretary General shall prepare and submit to the Committee the reports provided for in Article 19 of the Statute. He or she shall transmit them to members at the same time as the notification of the opening date of the appropriate session of the Committee.
- b. The Committee may also instruct the Secretary General to prepare a report on any question. The Secretary General shall assemble the material required by the representatives on the Committee and shall distribute it to them.

*Article 22*

The Secretary General shall be the channel of communication between the Committee and the Consultative Assembly.<sup>[3]</sup>

*Article 23*

The Secretary General shall provide the Committee with the necessary staff, who shall form part of the Secretariat.

*Article 24<sup>11</sup>*

The Secretary General, being responsible to the Committee for the activities of the Secretariat, shall draw up an annual report on these activities, which he or she shall transmit to members at the same time as the draft budget for the forthcoming year.

*Article 25*

- a. Consideration of the admission to the Council of a member or associate member must be initiated by a proposal put forward by at least one representative. The proposal must have been included in the agenda of the session at which it is discussed.
- b. Any State which the Committee has decided to invite shall receive through the Secretary General a notification of the invitation extended to it by the Committee. This notification shall set out the number of seats in the Consultative Assembly<sup>[3]</sup> to which the prospective member will be entitled, its proportion of the financial contribution and the amount of its contribution to the working capital fund. The Secretary General shall notify the members of the date of deposit of the instrument of accession of the new member.

*Article 26*

All consideration of the suspension of a member must begin by a proposal for suspension put forward by at least one representative. The proposal must have been included in the agenda of the session at which it is discussed. The member concerned shall receive through the Secretary General a notification of the decision reached in its case. This notification shall set out the legal and financial consequences of the decision.

*Article 27*

The procedure specified in the preceding article shall be followed in the event of a decision that a member who has been suspended shall cease to be a member or cease to be suspended.

*Article 28*

The Secretary General shall transmit to the Committee any notice of withdrawal received from a member. The Committee shall discuss it at its next meeting and decide on its legal and financial consequences, which shall be notified to the member concerned by the Secretary General.

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<sup>11</sup> Amended by the Ministers' Deputies at their 73<sup>rd</sup> meeting.