



Rules Applying to the Council of Ministers for the Ministerial Summit of the Union for the Mediterranean¹

1. General considerations

1.1. Scope.

The following rules apply to the Rhodes Model Regional Co-operation Conference. Please note that the Board is responsible for determining the rules that are in order to facilitate debate and discussion. In case of conflict of interpretation, the President is the final authority for determining the applicability of the Rules of Procedure.

1.2. Language.

English is the official language of RhodesMRC. A Delegate wishing to speak in an official language where simultaneous interpretation is not provided will be required to provide his or her own translation. Please note that time spent in translation will be counted towards total time allotted for a given speech.

1.3. Credentials.

The RhodesMRC Secretariat has accepted the credentials of delegates or observers prior to the opening of the conference. Actions relating to the alteration of rights or credentials of any staff member, delegate or chairperson may exclusively be initiated by the Secretary General. Representatives must wear approved credentials at all times during the conference.

¹ Hereinafter referred to as "the Council".

1.4. Dress Code.

In accordance with the delegate's diplomatic status a formal dress code is required. For male delegates a tie is obligatory and for female no revealing outfits are allowed. Informal clothing, such as jeans and trainers, as well as religious outfits are out of order. The secretariat reserves the right to expel a delegate due to his or her dress code.

1.5. Diplomatic Courtesy.

During Council sessions, delegates are expected to exercise diplomatic courtesy when addressing members of the Council and the Board. The Board has the authority to address diplomatic warnings to delegates who obviously violate the diplomatic courtesy. In case that the delegate's conduct seriously hampers the process within the Council, the President reserves the right to request his expulsion from the conference room.

1.6. Statements by the Secretariat.

Any member of the RhodesMRC Secretariat may issue verbal or written statements to the Council at any time during the conference.

2. The Board of the Council

2.1. Composition.

The Board of the Council of Ministers for the Ministerial Summit of the Union for the Mediterranean will be composed of the President of the Council and the two Co-Presidents of the Organization.

2.2. Competence of the Board.

The competence of the Board may not be questioned by the delegates.

2.3. Authorities and Responsibilities.

2.3.1. Authority of the President.

The President shall exercise ultimate authority over the Council's proceedings in an equitable and objective manner. He also reserves the right to propose a motion at any given time which should be seconded by a delegate and given that there are no objections.

2.3.2. Responsibilities of the President.

The President is responsible for all procedural matters pertaining to the Council, including, but not limited to, moderating debate, determining the applicability of the rules and if necessary, clarifying on the meaning of the existing rules without approval from the Council members.

2.3.3. Authority of the Co-Presidents.

The Co-Presidents shall exercise ultimate authority over the Council's proceedings in an equitable and objective manner in the absence of or after receiving appointment by the President. The Co-Presidents, in particular, can either take the floor, as any other delegate, in order to clarify the policy lines of the member states, or issue verbal and/or written statements addressed to the Council, at any time.

2.3.4. Responsibilities of the Co-Presidents.

The Co-Presidents are responsible for all procedural matters pertaining to the Council, including, but not limited to, moderating debate, determining the applicability of the rules and if necessary, clarifying on the meaning of the existing rules, their authority being subject to appointment by the President, pursuant to Rule 2.3.3. The Co-Presidents, in particular have the duty to make remarks when a member state is out of policy at any given discussion.

2.4. Caucus of the Board.

The Board reserves the right to halt the working process within the Council in order to take 30 seconds of caucus.

3. Delegations

3.1. Members.

The Ministers of the member states of the Union meet within the Council. Depending on the issue on the agenda, each state will be represented by the Minister holding the relevant portfolio (foreign affairs, culture, energy, finance etc).

3.2. Non-Council Members.

Pertaining to the issues discussed in the Council, various representatives from International Governmental (IG) and Non-Governmental (NG) Organizations may participate, in an observer capacity. Also, Libya holds a permanent seat as an Observer.

3.2.1. Debating Privileges.

A non-Council member is given debating rights. This will allow the delegation to be recognized by the President during debate, to submit Draft Ministerial Declarations or amendments, but not to move these to the floor or vote on any substantive matter.

3.3. Co-Presidency.

The Co-Presidents represent the EU countries and the Mediterranean Partner Countries on the basis of equity in the functions of the Union for the Mediterranean.

3.3.1. European Union Co-President.

Following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the Co-Presidency from the side of the European Union is held by the President of the EU and the President of the Commission (Heads of State and Government Summit), or the High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission (Ministerial Summit).

3.3.2. Mediterranean Partner Countries Co-President.

The second Co-President is elected for a two years term among the Mediterranean Partner Countries group.

4. Parliamentary procedure

4.1. Roll Call.

Attendance shall be confirmed by the President by a Roll Call at the beginning of every session. Delegates shall establish their presence in the Council by raising their placards and declaring “Present”.

4.2. Procedural Matters.

Procedural matters are those matters relating to the structure of the Council session as defined in the Rules of Procedure of the RhodesMRC. They include, but are not limited to, establishing speaking time, motions and adjournment of the Council session. All delegates must vote on procedural matters and no delegate may abstain. Roll Call vote is not in order for procedural matters.

4.3. Substantive Matters.

Substantive matters are defined as those matters relating to the specific topic at hand. Delegates that have established their presence at the initial Role Call shall act accordingly. Roll Call vote on substantive matters is in order following voting procedure as set in Rule 13.1.

4.3.1. Decision Making Process.

The Council during RhodesMRC has to adopt a Ministerial Declaration through the process of unanimity.

5. Quorum

Council activities and debate shall start when at least 50% +1 of the Union's member states

are present. If quorum is not met thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled start time of the Council session, the Council will start its session with the number of delegates already present, unless otherwise instructed by RhodesMRC Secretariat. Quorum shall be assumed when Council activity begins.

5.1. Verification of Quorum.

Delegates may move to the Verification of Quorum, where the President will proceed with Quorum confirmation by initiating a Roll Call. The Chair can rule the Motion dilatory without option for appeal.

6. Majority

Unless otherwise specified, no motions are debatable and all require a simple majority vote to pass.

6.1. Simple Majority.

A procedural matter requires a simple majority to pass, implying that fifty percent plus one members (50% + 1) of the Council must vote in favour of the matter to pass. If the vote is a tie, the matter will be considered to have failed.

6.2. Two-thirds (2/3) Majority.

A procedural or substantive matter requiring a two-thirds (2/3) majority to pass implies that two-thirds (2/3) of the Council members must vote in favour of the matter to pass.

6.3. Unanimity.

Unanimity is needed in order to reach a decision and adopt a Ministerial Declaration. Each member state has one vote. Abstentions are permissible and do not count against unanimity, being interpreted as an absence of the abstaining state from voting procedure.

7. Debate

7.1. Form of Debate.

Unless the President decides otherwise, moderated caucus will be the form of debate during all sessions of the Council. Any delegate wishing to speak should raise his/her placard and be recognized by the President.

7.2. Informal Debate.

During formal debate a motion can be made by any delegate for an Unmoderated Caucus, which constitutes informal debate. Informal debate can only occur on substantive issues and is out of order once a motion to close debate has passed. Motion to enter informal debate is in order, following the procedures outlined in Rules 10.3 and 10.4.

7.3. Recognition.

A Delegate may only address the Council if he/she has received permission from the President.

7.4. Interruptions.

A Speaker may not be interrupted by another delegate, unless the delegate has risen to a Point of Personal Privilege.

8. Speeches

8.1. Motion to Set Speaking Time.

A Delegate may move to set a time limit on speeches. The President may either rule the Motion dilatory at his/her discretion or put it to vote. A Delegate exceeding the allotted time for a speech may be called to order by the President.

9. Points

9.1. Point of Personal Privilege.

A Delegate may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege if a matter impairs him/her from participating fully in Council activities. The President shall try to effectively address the source of impairment. This point may interrupt a Speaker only due to inability.

9.2. Point of Order.

A Delegate may rise to a Point of Order if a rule of procedure is not properly observed by a Delegate or by the Board. The President will rule on the validity of the point. A Delegate rising to a Point of Order may not comment on the topic of discussion. A Point of Order ruled dilatory by the President may not be appealed. This point may not interrupt a Speaker.

9.3. Point of Parliamentary Inquiry.

A Delegate may rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry to request an explanation on the Rules of Procedure by the President. This point may not interrupt a Speaker.

9.4. Right of Reply.

A Delegate whose personal or national integrity has been impugned by another Delegate's comments may rise to a Right of Reply. Disagreement with the content of a Delegate's speech is not grounds for a Right of Reply. The President will recognize the Right of Reply at his/her discretion as well as decide on how to resolve the motion. Should the President rule the Right of Reply out of order, his/her decision cannot be appealed. No delegate may call for a Right of Reply on a Right of Reply. This point may not interrupt a Speaker.

10. Motions

10.1. Motion for the Adjournment of the Meeting.

A Delegate may move for the Adjournment of the Meeting to suspend all Council activities until the next scheduled meeting time. The President may rule the Motion out of order without possibility of appeal or put it to vote.

10.2. Motion for the Adjournment of the Session.

A Delegate may move for the Adjournment of the Session to cease permanently all Council activities². The President may rule the Motion out of order without possibility of appeal or put it to vote. In the event that the President approves this, there should be two (2) speakers for and two (2) speakers against and the motion will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority to pass.

10.3. Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus.

A Delegate may move for an Unmoderated Caucus, thereby suggesting a change from formal to informal debate. The Delegate who makes this motion must suggest a length and justification for the Unmoderated Caucus. The President may suggest a more appropriate caucus length and put it to vote or may rule the Unmoderated Caucus out of order without possibility of appeal. Once the Motion has passed, the Delegates will carry an informal discussion on the topic specified in the Motion without leaving the conference room.

10.4. Motion to Extend the Unmoderated Caucus.

A Delegate may move to extend the Unmoderated Caucus if he/she feels that additional time would benefit the work of the Council. The Delegate who moves for an extension of an Unmoderated Caucus must suggest a length for the extension, which shall not exceed the duration of the original Unmoderated Caucus. The President may suggest a more appropriate caucus length and put it to vote or may rule the Extension of the Unmoderated Caucus out of order without the possibility of appeal.

10.5. Motion to Table Debate on a Topic.

A Delegate may move to Table Debate in order to suspend debate on a substantive issue

² This motion is in order only to be used for the end of the conference.

without voting any Draft Ministerial Declaration that may be on the floor. If the President rules the Motion in order, one (1) Delegate shall speak in favour and one (1) Delegate shall speak against before proceeding with a vote. A two-thirds (2/3) majority is needed in order to table the debate.

10.6. Motion to Resume Debate on a Topic.

A Delegate may move to Resume Debate on a substantive issue that has been tabled (Rule 10.5). If the President rules the Motion in order, one (1) Delegate shall speak in favour and one (1) Delegate shall speak against before proceeding with a vote. A two-thirds (2/3) majority is needed in order to resume the debate.

10.7. Motion to Close Debate on a Draft Ministerial Declaration.

A Delegate may move to Close Debate in order to end debate on a Draft Ministerial Declaration, whereby the Council will enter voting procedure on all amendments on the floor. If the President rules the Motion in order, there will be only one (2) Delegates speaking against the Motion. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to pass the Motion.

10.8. Motion to Close Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion.

A Delegate may move to Close Debate in order to end Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion whereby the Council will enter voting procedure on all Draft Ministerial Declarations on the floor. If the President rules the Motion in order, there will be only two (2) Delegates speaking against the Motion. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to pass the Motion.

11. Declarations of the Council

11.1. Working Paper.

A Working Paper is an informal document used by Council Delegates to work on building a Draft Ministerial Declaration. A Working Paper will be distributed at the President's

discretion if requested by a Delegate.

11.2. Ministerial Declarations of the Summit.

11.2.1. Format.

Draft Ministerial Declarations must be properly formatted according to the guidelines found in the “RhodesMRC Draft Ministerial Declarations Writing” paper.

11.2.2. Sponsor.

The main writer/contributor of the Draft Ministerial Declaration is recognized as the Sponsor. The Sponsor must be present for a Draft Ministerial Declaration to be introduced to the floor. The Sponsor must agree to support a Ministerial Declaration, unless major changes have been introduced through the amendment process.

11.2.3. Introduction of a Draft Ministerial Declaration.

Delegates may move to introduce a Draft Ministerial Declaration once it has been approved and assigned a number by the President and distributed to the Council. Such an introduction shall be procedural in nature. The content of the introduction shall be limited to the reading of the Draft Ministerial Declaration as a whole where upon the Sponsor of the Draft Ministerial Declaration shall be granted the floor for the allotted time limit. Following this motion, a new debate will begin upon the introduced Draft Ministerial Declaration, according to rules in Section 7.

11.3. Amendments.

During Debate on a Draft Ministerial Declaration, a Delegate may move to introduce an Amendment, which will add to, strike out from or modify a part of the Draft Ministerial Declaration. The Amendment has to be first approved by the President.

11.3.1. Non Substantive Amendments.

Amendments correcting grammatical, spelling or formatting mistakes will be automatically

adopted without vote from the Council, at the discretion of the President. Following the initial reading of the Draft Ministerial Declaration by its sponsor, delegates are permitted to point out any such problems to the President.

11.3.2. Substantive Amendments.

All Amendments require approval from the President to be introduced. Amendments will be put to a vote prior to the vote on the Draft Ministerial Declaration as a whole. Amendments to Amendments are out of order. Due to the nature of the decision process in the Council, all amendments to a Draft Ministerial Declaration must be unanimously voted.

11.4. Withdrawal.

The Signatories of an Amendment may request its withdrawal at their discretion, before its adoption by the Council.

12. Voting Procedure

12.1. General.

The Council usually reaches decisions by allowing discussions to continue until a consensus is reached. In the event of a stalemate, the Council may make use of a tour de table (see Rule 12.2. below).

12.1.1. Unanimity.

For the decision process demanding Unanimity, refer to Rules 6.3. and 11.3.2., above.

12.2. Tour de Table.

Tour de Table shall be conducted at the discretion of the President. The President requests each delegate to give a short summary of his/her thinking on the matter under discussion, thus ensuring that every member state is able to outline his or her position and allowing the President to determine whether a compromise is possible.

12.3. Procedure.

When the President announces that the Council is entering voting procedure, no entering or exiting from the room will be permitted, unless there is an emergency or until voting procedure has come to an end. At this time, Motion for a Roll Call Vote is in order.

13. Method of Voting

Each Delegate of the Council has one vote and must demonstrate his/her voting intentions by raising his/her placard at the President's request unless there is a Roll Call Vote (see rule 13.1). Delegates must vote in favour, against or abstain.

13.1. Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call Vote may only be in order for substantive matters. This Motion is automatically accepted unless the President rules it out of order; the decision is not subject to appeal. The Roll Call starts from a delegate randomly selected by the President.

13.2. Passing.

During Roll Call, a Delegate may choose to pass. The President will place the Delegate at the bottom of the voting list. A Delegate who has passed once during a voting sequence may not pass again but must ascertain his vote.

13.3. Voting with Rights.

A Delegate may request a right of explanation after voting. Upon completion of voting, the Delegate will be permitted to explain the reasons as to why he/she has chosen to vote a certain way. The President may limit the speaking time at his/her discretion.

13.4. Voting on Draft Ministerial Declarations.

Draft Ministerial Declarations will be voted on in the order that they were numbered by the President. The result of the voting procedure is defined by the process outlined in Rule 6.3.

(Unanimity).

13.5. Voting on Amendments.

All Amendments shall be voted on in the order in which they were proposed before the Council closes debate on the Draft Ministerial Declaration that they concern. If one Amendment implies the rejection of a second Amendment, the second Amendment will not be voted upon. A passed Amendment shall be automatically included in the Draft Ministerial Declaration. Once all the Amendments relating to a Draft Ministerial Declaration have been voted on, the Council shall vote on the Draft Ministerial Declaration as a whole after Closure of the Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion. The result of the voting procedure is defined by the process outlined in Rules 6.3. (Unanimity) and 11.3.2.

14. Precedence Motions shall be considered in the following decreasing order.

Rule	Description	Debatable	Votes Required	Interrupt Speaker
9.1. Point of Personal Privilege	Feeling discomfort	No	No	Yes
9.2. Point of Order	To point out misuse of rules	No	No	No
9.4. Right of Reply	Reply to an insult	No	No	No
9.3. Point of Parliamentary Inquiry	Clarify the rules	No	No	No
8.1. Motion to Set Speaking Time	Define speaking time limit	No	Simple Majority	No
5.1. Motion for the Verification of Quorum	Seeking to verify the presence of delegates	No	No	No
13.1. Motion for a Roll Call	Roll Call Vote	No	No	No
10.3. Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus	Proceed to an Unmoderated Caucus	No	Simple Majority	No
11.2.3. Motion to introduce a Draft Ministerial Declaration	Introduction of a Draft Ministerial Declaration	No	Simple Majority	No
11.3. Motion to Introduce an Amendment	Introduction of an Amendment	No	Simple Majority	No
10.5. Motion to Table Debate	Postpone debate	Yes (1+/1-)	2/3 Majority	No
10.5. Motion to Resume Debate	Resume a tabled debate	Yes (1+/1-)	2/3 Majority	No
10.7. Motion to Close Debate on a Draft Ministerial Declaration	Close the separate debate on a Draft Ministerial Declaration	Yes (2-)	2/3 Majority	No
10.8. Motion to Close Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion	Close debate on the Topic Area	Yes (2-)	2/3 Majority	No
10.1. Motion to Adjourn Meeting	Adjourn until next scheduled meeting	No	Simple Majority	No
10.2. Motion to Adjourn the Session	Close the Session at the end of the Conference	Yes (2+/2-)	2/3 Majority	No