



WORKING GROUP ON POLICY AND LEGAL HARMONIZATION (WGPL)

LEGAL EXPERTS TASK TEAM (LETT)

Online Meeting of 3rd February 2026

PAPU/AC/PRC/WGPL/LETT/06/2026- Doc No.03 & Annex

Original: French

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ACTS OF THE UNION AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL ON THE INTRODUCTION OF ONLINE MEETINGS AND VOTING

Agenda item No. 5

1. Subject Proposed amendments to the Acts of the Union and Rules of Procedure of the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Administrative Council on the introduction of online meetings and voting	2. References/paragraphs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acts of the Union;• Rules of Procedure of the Conference and the Council;• African Postal Strategy 2026-2030.
3. Decision expected <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Consider the document;▪ Make any comments or proposals.	

I. INTRODUCTION

During its 41st Ordinary Session held from 29th to 30th August 2023 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, the Administrative Council passed **Resolution No. 05/PAPU/AC/XLI/2023** regarding the presentation of a Resolution to amend the Acts of the Union by introducing online voting and meetings. This Resolution also instructed the General Secretariat to submit the proposed amendments to the 11th Ordinary Session of the Plenipotentiary Conference for adoption.

Accordingly, the General Secretariat has re-examined the Acts of the Union and the Rules of Procedure of the Conference and the Council in order to propose amendments aimed primarily at incorporating online meetings and voting as envisaged in the above-mentioned Resolution.

II. DECISION EXPECTED

The Legal Experts Task Team is hereby requested to review the proposed changes and provide guidance comments, observations, or proposals.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PAPU ACTS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE AND
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL ON INTRODUCTION OF ONLINE MEETINGS AND VOTING**

No.	REFERENCES	COMMENTS	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
	PAPU CONVENTION		
1.	ARTICLE 1 (Additional Definitions) Definitions	<p>The introduction of online meetings and voting involves the use of certain terminology that needs to be defined</p> <p>In addition, it has noted that terms used in the PAPU Acts need to be defined to avoid any ambiguity.</p>	<p>ARTICLE 1 (Additional Definitions) Definitions</p> <p>28) <u>Online meeting</u>: Refers to any meeting of the Union's bodies in which all representatives of the Member States participate exclusively remotely via the electronic platform facilitated and provided by the General Secretariat.</p> <p>29) <u>Online voting</u>: Refers to any vote cast during meetings of the Union's bodies by all representatives of Member States with voting rights through the electronic voting system facilitated and provided by the General Secretariat.</p> <p>30) <u>Opening of the session</u>: Refers to the formal act by which the Chairperson or one of the Vice-Chairpersons, as the case may be,</p>

			<p><i>officially declares a session open in order to proceed with the consideration of the items on the agenda for that session.</i></p> <p>31) <u>Physical meeting</u>: <i>Refers to any meeting of the Union's bodies exclusively held and conducted by physical attendance and participation by representatives of the Member States at the Union's headquarters or on at the territory of a Member State.</i></p> <p>32) <u>Physical vote</u>: <i>Refers to any vote accessible exclusively to all member states physically represented at meetings of the union's bodies with a right to vote. The physical vote may be conducted, without limitation, by a show of hands or by secret ballot by roll call in alphabetical order of the names of the Member States.</i></p> <p>33) <u>Hybrid meeting</u>: <i>Refers to any meeting of the Union's bodies held and conducted in combination of both Physical and Online meeting in which representatives of the member states may participate either physically and/or remotely.</i></p> <p>34) <u>Remote participation</u>: <i>Refers to participation in a meeting using the electronic platform facilitated and provided by the General Secretariat.</i></p> <p>35) <u>Open ballot</u>: <i>Refers to a vote cast physical by show of hands or electronically or a combination of both during or at the end of which</i></p>
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			<p><i>the name and/or choice of each Member State that participated is known to all participants at the meeting.</i></p> <p>36) <u>Secret ballot</u>: <i>Refers to a vote cast physically on ballot paper or electronically in which only the aggregate results are published, without the names and choices of the Member States that participated in the ballot.</i></p> <p>37) <u>Permanent organs</u>: <i>Refers to the Union's statutory bodies responsible for decision-making, administration, and implementation of Union programmes..</i></p> <p>38) <u>Subsidiary organs</u>: <i>Refers to anybody created by the Conference or Council responsible for examining, giving opinions and making recommendations on issues for which they were created.</i></p> <p>39) <u>Ad hoc bodies</u>: <i>Refers to any group of experts mandated by either subsidiary organs or permanent organs to study specific issues and formulate recommendations and/or technical opinions for consideration by the bodies that created them.</i></p> <p>40) <u>Plenipotentiary</u>: <i>Refers to Ministers or any representative of Member States vested with full powers to participate in meetings of the Union's bodies and sign final Acts of the Union on behalf of, and for the account of the accrediting Member State.</i></p>
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2.	<p>ARTICLE 1 bis (New)</p> <p>Definitions</p>	<p>Implementation of Resolution No. 05/PAPU/AC/XLI/2023 to present a draft decision amending the Acts of the Union with regard to online voting and meetings entails expanding the definitions of some terms used in the Acts of the Union to include remote participation.</p>	<p>ARTICLE 1 bis (New)</p> <p>Definitions</p> <p>Without prejudice to the applicable provisions of the Acts of the Union, any reference in the Acts, in whatever form, to the terms <u>“attend”, “hold”, “convene”, “participate”, “represent”, “be represented”, “be present”, “take part”, “sessions”, “meeting”, “vote”, “votes cast”, “present and voting”</u> shall be understood as including, in addition to in-person participation, the possibility of remote participation and representation of the Member States and Observers of the Union through the electronic means or platforms facilitated and provided by the PAPU General Secretariat.</p>
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No.	REFERENCES	COMMENTS	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
	DETAILED REGULATIONS OF THE CONVENTION		
1.	<p>ARTICLE 27 Powers of Delegations</p> <p>2. The instruments of accreditation shall be deposited at the opening of the meeting with the authority designated to that effect.</p>	<p>With the introduction of online meetings and voting, accreditation documents must be sent within a reasonable time frame, in addition to being submitted, in order to accommodate technical configuration requirements, particularly for the voting system.</p>	<p>ARTICLE 27 Powers of Delegations</p> <p>2. The instruments of accreditation shall be deposited at the opening of the meeting with the authority designated to that effect.</p> <p>....</p> <p>3. (New) Member States intending to participate remotely in the sessions of the Plenipotentiary Conference or the Administrative Council shall send their instruments of accreditation and proxies to the General Secretariat.</p>
4.	<p>ARTICLE 28 Seating Order</p> <p>The delegations shall be seated in alphabetical order of the names of their countries.</p>	<p>Following the introduction of online participation, Article 28 has been amended to restrict seating order to Member States physically present at Conference and Council sessions.</p>	<p>ARTICLE 28 Seating Order</p> <p>Delegations physically present during Conference or Council sessions shall be seated in alphabetical order of the names of their countries.</p>

5.	<p style="text-align: center;">ARTICLE 29 Quorum</p> <p>For sessions of the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Administrative Council, the quorum shall be made up of two-thirds of Member States of these organs of the Union. Where the two-thirds give a decimal figure, it shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number.</p>	<p>Following the introduction of online meetings and voting, this provision should be amended to incorporate online participation by Member States in determining the quorum.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed to add the term “present”, considering the fact that, in accordance with the proposed amendment to Article 1 bis, the term “present” includes not only Member States physically present but also those participating remotely.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ARTICLE 29 Quorum</p> <p>For sessions of the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Administrative Council, the quorum shall be constituted if two-thirds of Member States of these organs of the Union are present. Where the two-thirds give a decimal figure, it shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number.</p>
6.	<p style="text-align: center;">ARTICLE 31 Venue of Meetings of the Union</p> <p>The sessions of the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Administrative Council shall be held at the seat of the Union unless a Member State invites the Conference or Council to meet on its territory.</p> <p>In the latter circumstance, the Member State organizing the event shall bear the full costs, including:</p>	<p>This provision seems to require in-person participation only. It should therefore be amended to include the possibility of online participation, i.e. hybrid sessions of the Conference and the Council.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ARTICLE 31 Venue of Meetings of the Union</p> <p>1. The sessions of the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Administrative Council shall be held at the seat of the Union unless a Member State invites the Conference or Council to meet on its territory. In the latter circumstance, the Member State organizing the event shall bear the full costs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Fees and equipment for interpretation services; b) Secretariat staff accommodation, boarding and services;

	<p>a) Fees and equipment for interpretation services;</p> <p>b) Secretariat staff accommodation, boarding and services;</p> <p>...</p> <p>c) Any other expense as may be determined from time to time by the Plenipotentiary Conference or Administrative Council.....</p>		<p>c) Any other expense as may be determined from time to time by the Plenipotentiary Conference or Administrative Council".</p> <p>2. (New) However, the sessions of the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Administrative Council may be held in hybrid form with in-person and remote participation by delegations.</p>
7.	<p>Article 32: (New)</p> <p>Remote participation and representation</p>	<p>The introduction of online meetings and votes has created a need to establish the relevant terms and conditions.</p>	<p>Article 32: (New)</p> <p>Remote participation and representation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should a Member State intend to participate remotely in the sessions of the Conference or the Council, it shall notify the General Secretariat 2. In order to participate in a secret ballot, a Member State participating online must give proxy, prior to such a secret ballot, of verbally informing the Chairperson of the Council or the Conference that it wishes another member of the Council or the Conference physically present to represent it for the purposes of that ballot.

			3. In the case of an open ballot, proxy may be given to another Member State represented physically or remotely.
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No.	REFERENCES	COMMENTS	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
	RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE		
1.	ARTICLE 1: Sessions	Implementation of Resolution No. 05/PAPU/AC/XLI/2023 to present a draft decision amending the Acts of the Union with regard to online voting and meetings entails expanding the definitions of some terms used in the Rules of Procedure of the Plenipotentiary Conference to include remote participation.	<p>RULE 1 (New) : Sessions Definitions</p> <p>Without prejudice to the applicable provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Plenipotentiary Conference, any reference in the Rules of Procedure, in whatever form, to the terms “attend”, “hold”, “convene”, “participate”, “represent”, “be represented”, “be present”, “take part”, “sessions”, “meeting”, “vote”, “votes cast”, “present and voting”, “secret ballot”, “open vote” and “closed session” shall be understood as including, in addition to in-person participation, the possibility of remote participation and representation of the Member States and Observers of the Union through the electronic means or platforms facilitated and provided by the PAPU General Secretariat.</p>

2.	<p>RULE 8: Seating order</p> <p>Delegations of Member States shall be seated in alphabetical order of their country names.</p>	<p>Following the introduction of online participation, Article 8 has been amended to restrict seating order to Member States physically present at Conference sessions.</p>	<p>RULE 8: Seating order</p> <p>Delegations physically present during Conference sessions shall be seated in alphabetical order of the names of their countries.</p>
3.	<p>RULE 9: Quorum</p> <p>The quorum shall be made up of two-thirds of Member States of the Union.</p>	<p>Following the introduction of online meetings and voting, this provision should be amended to incorporate online participation by Member States in determining the quorum.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed to add the term “present”, considering the fact that, in accordance with the proposed amendment to Article 1 bis (New) “Definitions”, the term “present” includes not only Member States physically present but also those participating remotely.</p>	<p>RULE 9: Quorum</p> <p>The quorum shall be constituted if two-thirds of Member States of the Union are present.</p>
4.	<p>RULE 18: Method of voting</p> <p>1. The Conference shall as far as possible take decisions by consensus.</p>	<p>Implementation of Resolution No. 05/PAPU/AC/XLI/2023 to present a draft decision amending the Acts of the Union with regard to online voting and meetings entails amending this provision.</p> <p>Furthermore, we consider voting by show of hands to be restrictive, as it is one of the methods of open voting. It</p>	<p>RULE 18: Methods of voting</p> <p>1. The Conference shall as far as possible take decisions by consensus.</p> <p>2. Where consensus fails or where voting is required, it shall be by show of hands an open</p>

<p>2. Where voting is required, it shall be by show of hands.</p> <p>3. When voting by show of hand is not feasible, it shall be done by secret ballot.</p> <p>4. The Chairperson of the Conference shall nominates three scrutineers who shall take the necessary measures to ensure the secrecy of the vote.</p> <p>5. Each delegation shall receive one ballot paper bearing the subject matter of the item to be voted on.</p> <p>6. Abstentions, blank or invalid allot papers shall not be considered in calculating the required majority.</p> <p>7. In case of a tie, the proposal shall be</p>	<p>is therefore proposed that this provision be amended to provide for open voting, in addition to secret ballot, which may be by show of hands or by electronic means.</p>	<p>vote shall be taken, either by a show of hands or, where applicable, by means of the electronic voting system provided.</p> <p>3. When voting by show of hands is not possible, a secret ballot may be held. However, any Member State shall be entitled to request a secret ballot. In this case, if at least one (01) Member State objects to the request for a secret ballot, it shall be put to a vote by show of hands and deemed adopted if supported by a simple majority of the Member States present and voting.</p> <p>4. In case of a secret ballot:</p> <p>a) The Chairperson of the session shall appoint three scrutineers who shall take the necessary measures to ensure the secrecy of the vote.</p> <p>b) Each delegation shall receive one ballot paper bearing the subject matter of the item to be voted on.</p>
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	<p>considered to have been rejected.</p> <p>8. Subject to any provisions to the contrary, all decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority of Member States present and voting.</p> <p>9. Once deliberations on a resolution have been closed, the chairperson shall put it to the vote together with its amendments. The vote shall only be interrupted by a point of order on the manner in which it is being conducted.</p> <p>10. Where an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be put to the vote first. Where two or more amendments are</p>		<p>c) Abstentions, blank or invalid ballot papers shall not be considered in calculating the required majority.</p> <p>5. In case of a tie in the tallying of votes, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected.</p> <p>6. Subject to any provisions to the contrary, all decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority of Member States present and voting.</p> <p>7. Once deliberations on a resolution have been closed, the Chairperson shall put it to the vote together with its amendments. The vote shall only be interrupted by a point of order on the manner in which it is being conducted.</p> <p>8. Where an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be put to the vote first. Where two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the vote shall first be on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom,</p>
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	<p>moved to a proposal, the vote shall first be on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote. If one or several amendments are adopted, the amended proposal is then put to the vote. If none of the amendments is adopted, the proposal is put to the vote in its original form. A proposal shall be considered as an amendment to a text if it adds or removes parts therefrom or otherwise modifies it.</p>		<p>and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote.</p> <p>If one or several amendments are adopted, the amended proposal is then put to the vote. If none of the amendments is adopted, the proposal is put to the vote in its original form. A proposal shall be considered as an amendment to a text if it adds or removes parts therefrom or otherwise modifies it.</p> <p>9. Parts of a proposal, resolution or a motion shall be voted on separately when so requested. In this case, the text resulting from a series of votes shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of a proposed resolution or motion have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.</p>
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	<p>11. Parts of a proposal, resolution or a motion shall be voted on separately when so requested. In this case, the text resulting from a series of votes shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of a proposed resolution or motion have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.</p>		
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No.	REFERENCES	COMMENTS	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
	RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL		
1.	ARTICLE 1: Sessions	Implementation of Resolution No. 05/PAPU/AC/XLI/2023 to present a draft decision amending the Acts of the Union with regard to online voting and meetings entails expanding the definitions of some terms used in the Rules of Procedure of the Administrative Council to include remote participation.	RULE 1 (New) : Sessions Definitions Without prejudice to the applicable provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Plenipotentiary Conference, any reference in the Rules of Procedure, in whatever form, to the terms “attend”, “hold”, “convene”, “participate”, “represent”, “be represented”, “be present”, “take part”, “sessions”, “meeting”, “vote”, “votes cast”, “present and voting”, “secret ballot”, “open vote” and “closed session” shall be understood as including, in addition to in-person participation, the possibility of remote participation and representation of the Member States and Observers of the Union through the electronic means or platforms provided by the PAPU General Secretariat.
2.	RULE 8: Seating order Delegations of Member States shall be seated in alphabetical order of their country names.	Following the introduction of online participation, Article 8 has been amended to restrict seating order to Member States physically present at Council sessions.	RULE 8: Seating order Delegations physically present during Council sessions shall be seated in alphabetical order of the names of their countries.

3.	<p>RULE 9: Quorum</p> <p>The quorum shall be made up of two-thirds of Council members.</p>	<p>Following the introduction of online meetings and voting, this provision should be amended to incorporate online participation by Member States in determining the quorum.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed to add the term “present”, considering the fact that, in accordance with the proposed amendment to Article 1 bis, the term “present” includes not only Member States physically present but also those participating remotely.</p>	<p>RULE 9: Quorum</p> <p>The quorum shall be constituted if two-thirds of Council members are present.</p>
4.	<p>RULE 18: Method of voting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council shall as far as possible take decisions by consensus. 2. Where voting is required, it shall be by show of hands. 	<p>Where consensus fails, the Administrative Council shall vote either by show of hands or by secret ballot. However, voting by show of hands is restrictive because it is one of the open voting methods and does not cater for electronic voting. It is therefore proposed that this provision be amended to provide for open voting, in addition to secret ballot,</p>	<p>RULE 18: Methods of voting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council shall as far as possible take decisions by consensus. 2. Where consensus fails or where voting is required, it shall be by show of hands an open vote shall be taken, either by a show of hands or, where applicable, by means of the electronic voting system provided. 3. When voting by show of hand is not feasible, it shall be done by secret ballot. However, any Member State shall be entitled to request a secret ballot. In this case, if at least one (01) Member State objects to the request for a secret ballot, it

	<p>3. When voting by show of hand is not feasible, it shall be done by secret ballot.</p> <p>4. The Chairperson of the Conference shall appoint three scrutineers who shall take the necessary measures to ensure the secrecy of the vote.</p> <p>5. Each delegation shall receive one ballot paper bearing the subject matter of the item to be voted on.</p> <p>6. Abstentions, blank or invalid allot papers shall not be considered in calculating the required majority.</p> <p>7. In case of a tie, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected.</p>	<p>which may be by show of hands or by electronic means.</p>	<p>shall be put to a vote by show of hands and deemed adopted if supported by a simple majority of the Member States present and voting.</p> <p>4. In case of a secret ballot:</p> <p>a) The Chairperson of the session shall appoint three scrutineers who shall take the necessary measures to ensure the secrecy of the vote.</p> <p>b) Each delegation shall receive one ballot paper bearing the subject matter of the item to be voted on.</p> <p>c) Abstentions, blank or invalid allot papers shall not be considered in calculating the required majority.</p> <p>5. In case of a tie in the tallying of votes, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected.</p> <p>6. Subject to any provisions to the contrary, all decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority of Member States present and voting.</p> <p>7. Once deliberations on a resolution have been closed, the chairperson shall put it to the vote together with its amendments. The vote shall only be interrupted by a point of order on the manner in which it is being conducted.</p>
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	<p>8. Subject to any provisions to the contrary, all decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority of Member States present and voting.</p> <p>9. Once deliberations on a resolution have been closed, the chairperson shall put it to the vote together with its amendments. The vote shall only be interrupted by a point of order on the manner in which it is being conducted.</p> <p>10. Where an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be put to the vote first. Where two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the vote shall first be on</p>		<p>8. Where an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be put to the vote first. Where two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the vote shall first be on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote. If one or several amendments are adopted, the amended proposal is then put to the vote. If none of the amendments is adopted, the proposal is put to the vote in its original form. A proposal shall be considered as an amendment to a text if it adds or removes parts therefrom or otherwise modifies it.</p> <p>9. Parts of a proposal, resolution or a motion shall be voted on separately when so requested. In this case, the text resulting from a series of votes shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of a proposed resolution or motion have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected altogether.</p>
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	<p>the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote. If one or several amendments are adopted, the amended proposal is then put to the vote. If none of the amendments is adopted, the proposal is put to the vote in its original form. A proposal shall be considered as an amendment to a text if it adds or removes parts therefrom or otherwise modifies it.</p>		
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	<p>shall be voted on separately when so requested. In this case, the text resulting from a series of votes shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of a proposed resolution or motion have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.</p>		
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