

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES OF THE ECPRD

STATUTES OF THE ECPRD

The Statutes of the ECPRD were adopted by the ECPRD Secretaries General meeting at the Conference of Speakers in Budapest on 7 June 1996 and subsequently amended in Tallinn on 31 May 2006 and in Strasbourg on 21 September 2012.

PREAMBLE

The European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD) was created in 1977 at the request of the Conference of Speakers of European Parliamentary Assemblies (as from 2004: the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament).

Old version	New version
<p>I. AIMS</p> <p><i>Article 1</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The objectives of the ECPRD are to promote the exchange of information, ideas, experience and good practice among the administrations of parliaments in Europe on subjects of common interest; to strengthen close co-operation among parliamentary services in all fields of parliamentary administration, legislation, information, research and documentation; and to collect, exchange and publicise studies produced by parliamentary services. 2. In the exchange of information, the ECPRD shall promote, wherever possible, the use and development of Information and Communication Technology. 3. The ECPRD shall co-operate with other networks dealing with the exchange of information among parliaments in Europe. 	
<p>II. COMPOSITION OF THE ECPRD</p> <p><i>Article 2</i></p> <p>The ECPRDs members are: the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and parliamentary chambers where the President is a member of the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament</p>	
<p><i>Article 3</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A parliament possessing special guest or observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe may participate in the different activities of the ECPRD but may not vote in its bodies. 2. The ECPRD may co-operate with non-European parliamentary chambers. 	

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<p>III. GOVERNING BODIES OF THE ECPRD</p> <p><i>i. THE MEETING OF THE SECRETARIES GENERAL</i></p> <p>Article 4 The ECPRD operates under the authority of the Secretaries General of member chambers. At their meetings held every two years on the occasion of the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament, they approve the activity report and action programme of the ECPRD and establish priorities for its functioning.</p>	
<p><i>ii. THE CONFERENCE OF CORRESPONDENTS</i></p> <p>Article 5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Secretary General of each parliamentary chamber appoints a senior official (Correspondent) to represent the chamber within the Conference of Correspondents of the ECPRD. Secretaries General may also appoint Deputy Correspondents. 2. The Correspondent is selected from officials whose activities bring them into close contact with the ECPRD and who have direct access to the Secretary General of the chamber. He/she can thereby co-ordinate the activities of those officials of his/her chamber who are asked to play an active role in the ECPRD. 	
<p>Article 6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Conference of Correspondents is responsible, in co-operation with the Co-Directors (see Article 8), for the organisation of the activities of the ECPRD. It examines the draft report on the activities of the ECPRD, drafted and presented by the Co-Directors, which includes the action programme of the ECPRD for the following two years. 2. The report, together with the action programme, is then submitted for approval to the Secretaries General and subsequently to the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament which is invited to take note of it. 3. Meetings of the Conference of Correspondents, chaired by the Co-Directors, take place at least every twelve months. 4. Decisions of the Conference of Correspondents are reached, in principle, by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, issues will be decided by a vote with a necessary majority of at least two-thirds of the votes cast, representing a majority of members of the ECPRD (see Article 2). 	<p>Article 6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Conference of Correspondents is responsible, in co-operation with the Co-Directors (see Article 8), for the organisation of the activities of the ECPRD. It examines and adopts the annual intermediate activity reports on the activities of the ECPRD, drafted and presented by the Co-Directors, and the action programme of the ECPRD for the following years. 2. The report, together with the action programme, is then submitted for approval to the Secretaries General and subsequently to the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament which is invited to take note of it. 2. Meetings of the Conference of Correspondents, chaired by the Co-Directors, take place at least every twelve months. 3. Decisions of the Conference of Correspondents are reached, in principle, by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, issues will be decided by a vote with a necessary majority of at least two-thirds of the votes cast, representing a majority of members of the ECPRD (see Article 2).

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<p><i>iii. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</i></p> <p>Article 7</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Executive Committee is composed of the two Co-Directors and five Correspondents elected by the Conference of Correspondents. The Committee will meet as often as necessary, at the request of at least two of its members or five Correspondents. 2. The members of the Executive Committee, other than the Co-Directors, shall be elected for a period of three years. They may be re-elected. Elections will take place at the Correspondents' annual meeting, with due consideration being paid to the need to maintain geographical balance in the membership of the Executive Committee. 3. The Executive Committee may take decisions when a majority of its members is present. Decisions shall be taken by a majority of the votes cast. 	<p><i>iii. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</i></p> <p>Article 7</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Executive Committee is composed of the two Co-Directors and five Correspondents elected by the Conference of Correspondents. The Committee will meet as often as necessary, at the request of at least two of its members or five Correspondents. 2. The members of the Executive Committee, other than the Co-Directors, shall be elected for a period of three years. They may be re-elected once. Elections will take place at the Correspondents' annual meeting, with due consideration being paid to the need to maintain geographical balance in the membership of the Executive Committee. 3. The Executive Committee may take decisions when a majority of its members is present. Decisions shall be taken by a majority of the votes cast. 4. (new) The Executive Committees prepares the biennial activity report which, together with the ECPRD Priorities for the upcoming two years, is then submitted for approval to the Secretaries General of Parliaments at their meeting during the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament.
<p><i>iv. THE CO-DIRECTORS</i></p> <p>Article 8</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Secretaries General of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe each nominate a senior official as a Co-Director of the ECPRD. 2. The two Co-Directors are responsible for the management of all activities of the ECPRD and are assisted by the two Co-Secretaries of the ECPRD and by other officials of their respective institutions. 3. The Co-Directors may at the same time be the Correspondents for their assemblies. 	

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<p>IV. WORKING METHODS</p> <p>Article 9</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ECPRD promotes co-operation between member chambers through the exchange of information, compilation of documentation and studies and the organisation of seminars; and by the sharing of knowledge of parliamentary ICT applications. On a proposal from the Executive Committee, the Conference of Correspondents shall establish detailed guidelines for studies and comparative requests and for the organisation of ECPRD seminars. 2. The ECPRD may also participate in or initiate other activities organised within its fields of interest. 3. When it considers that a given area requires a continuity of activity, the Conference of Correspondents may decide on the appointment of a Co-ordinator responsible for promoting close co-operation between the member chambers in that area. The Co-ordinator shall be appointed by the Executive Committee from among the competent staff of member chambers, with the consent of the chamber concerned, for a renewable term of three years. 4. On a proposal from the Executive Committee, and to meet specific terms of reference, the Conference of Correspondents may also decide to set up ad hoc working groups composed of staff of member chambers. The Executive Committee shall determine their duration, which must not exceed three years. 	
<p>V. FINANCING OF THE ECPRD</p> <p>Article 10</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member chambers of the ECPRD meet the cost of participation of their officials in ECPRD activities as well as the costs of communication with the ECPRD. 2. Member chambers may organise activities of the ECPRD, such as meetings, seminars etc., and bear the costs of such events. They may also make voluntary financial contributions to the ECPRD. 3. The operating costs of the ECPRD are covered by the budgets of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in conformity with current practice. 4. The ECPRD may accept outside donations following a favourable opinion from the Conference of Correspondents. 	
<p>VI. REVISION OF THE STATUTES</p> <p>Article 11</p> <p>The revision of these Statutes is the responsibility of the Secretaries General of the member chambers gathered at their meeting on the occasion of the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament.</p>	

Explanation

In order to find the right balance between experience and fresh ideas and therefore increase its effectiveness, the Executive Committee of the ECPRD proposed to limit the membership of its elected members to two consecutive terms for a total of six years. This suggestion found the approval of the correspondents at their annual Conference in Strasbourg in October 2017 (see amendment to Article 7.2 above).

Furthermore, the modifications on the treatment of the biennial ECPRD activity reports will assure that its content is mainly based on the annual intermediate activity reports, which are presented and approved at the annual Conference of ECPRD Correspondents. The old rule laid down in Article 6 could not be applied due to the fact that the Conference of Correspondents often takes place after the meeting of Secretaries General in the same year, thus preventing the Correspondents from examining the draft biennial report (see amendments to Articles 6.2 and 7.4 above).

In order to enter into force, these proposals require the agreement of the Secretaries General.