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**Matters related to intergovernmental,
non-governmental, governmental
and other organizations**

Appropriate procedures for reviewing the applications of non-governmental organizations for consultative status

Note by the Director General

In compliance with decision IDB.44/Dec.17, taken by the Board at its forty-fourth session, the present note proposes appropriate procedures for reviewing the applications of non-governmental organizations for consultative status with UNIDO.

I. Introduction

1. The Industrial Development Board may accord consultative status to international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in accordance with Article 19.1(b) of the Constitution and the provisions of the guidelines, issued by the General Conference at its first session, for the relationship of UNIDO with intergovernmental, governmental, non-governmental and other organizations (GC.1/Dec.41 of 12 December 1985) (the "Guidelines"). The Guidelines set out the criteria and procedure for granting consultative status to NGOs, as well as the information that applying organizations must provide to the Director General. In terms of paragraph 17 of the Guidelines, "[t]he Board shall establish appropriate procedures for reviewing applications"
2. In its decision IDB.44/Dec.17 of 24 November 2016, the Board "[r]equested the Secretariat to draft, in consultation with Member States, appropriate procedures for reviewing applications for consultative status, for approval of the Board in accordance with Article 19.1(b) of the Constitution and paragraph 17 of the guidelines for the relationship of UNIDO with intergovernmental, governmental, non-governmental and other organizations (General Conference decision GC.1/Dec.41)."
3. As requested by the Board, section IV of this note contains a set of draft procedures for reviewing the applications of NGOs for consultative status with UNIDO.

For reasons of economy, this document has not been printed. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.



II. Existing practice for reviewing applications

4. The Guidelines stipulate that applications for consultative status must be addressed to the Director General at least four months prior to the next scheduled session of the Board in order for them to be considered at that session.
5. In practice, the Secretariat reviews incoming applications against the criteria set out in the Guidelines and verifies that the organization seeking consultative status has provided the information required of it. Thereafter, information on the applying organization is submitted to the members of the Board in a pre-session document for consideration and decision 45 days before the session.
6. At the second session of the Board (13-15 October 1986), the Director General proposed that, “to facilitate and accelerate its work, the Board may wish to establish an ad hoc committee, composed of the Bureau of the Board and the Director General” for the review of the applications of NGOs for consultative status (document IDB.2/5, paras. 2 and 3).
7. At subsequent sessions, the pre-session document presenting information on NGOs applying for consultative status proposed that the Board should “follow the practice established at previous sessions and request the Bureau of the Board to review the applications of, and information on, the respective NGO(s) and submit its recommendations to the Board for consideration at its current session”.
8. A practice accordingly exists whereby the applications of NGOs seeking consultative status are considered by the Bureau of the Board at its first meeting on the first day of the session in question. Should further clarification be required or questions arise, the official responsible for liaising with the NGO under consideration may also be present.
9. It is also established practice for the President of the Board to communicate the Bureau’s recommendations on applications for consultative status to the Board in plenary, under the applicable agenda item. In addition, the President is responsible for submitting draft decisions on the applications to the Board for its consideration.

III. Survey by the Secretariat

10. In March 2017, the Secretariat conducted a survey of the procedures followed by other United Nations organizations to review the applications of NGOs for consultative or observer status. The survey revealed that:

(a) The Guidelines of UNIDO are in line with those of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and other organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO);

(b) The criteria utilized by other United Nations organizations to grant consultative or observer status to NGOs are either almost identical to those of UNIDO (ECOSOC, WIPO) or less detailed (FAO);

(c) None of the United Nations organizations that responded to the Secretariat’s survey has, in addition to its guidelines, any formal procedures for considering the applications of NGOs. As at UNIDO, applications are first reviewed by the secretariat of the organization before being submitted to the relevant governing body for a decision. More formal mechanisms have only been established where a significantly higher number of applications are processed (e.g. the ECOSOC Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations reviewed 464 applications in 2016, compared to the two applications received by UNIDO in 2016, one in 2015 and none in 2014).

IV. Proposed procedures

11. In light of the above, and based on past organizational practice, the following procedures are proposed for reviewing the applications of NGOs for consultative status with UNIDO:

Procedures for reviewing the applications of non-governmental organizations for consultative status with UNIDO

Introduction

(a) The present procedures are established by the Industrial Development Board pursuant to paragraph 17 of the guidelines, issued by the General Conference in its decision GC.1/Dec.41, for the relationship of UNIDO with intergovernmental, governmental, non-governmental and other organizations (the “Guidelines”);

(b) The procedures provide a framework for the review of applications for consultative status addressed to the Director General by international and national non-governmental organizations;

(c) The procedures supplement, and should be read in conjunction with, the provisions of the Guidelines;

(d) Without prejudice to the provisions of the Guidelines, the Board may modify the present procedures or adapt them in a particular case should the circumstances so require;

Preliminary assessment by the Secretariat

(e) Upon receipt of an application for consultative status, which should not be later than four months prior to the session, the Secretariat shall conduct a preliminary assessment in order to determine whether the application meets the requirements of the Guidelines;

(f) In particular, the Secretariat shall determine whether the applying organization fulfils the criteria stipulated in paragraph 14 of the Guidelines and whether it has furnished the information specified in paragraph 15 of the Guidelines;

(g) As a rule, the preliminary assessment shall be conducted by the Policymaking Organs Secretariat (PMO) in close consultation with the relevant technical departments and regional divisions and, if necessary, the Legal Advisor;

(h) The Director General or an official acting on behalf of the Director General may request the applying organization to provide further information for the purposes of the preliminary assessment;

(i) Following completion of the preliminary assessment, the Director General shall circulate a pre-session document among members of the Board, no later than 45 days before the session, containing information on the applying organization and on the outcome of the preliminary assessment;

Review by the Enlarged Bureau and the Bureau of the Board

(j) The Enlarged Bureau of the Board shall meet to review the application of, and the information on, the applying organization preferably 10 working days prior to the session in question;

(k) The Enlarged Bureau shall submit its recommendation on the application to the Bureau of the Board;

(l) The Bureau of the Board shall consider the application and the recommendation of the Enlarged Bureau, usually at its first meeting held during the session;

(m) The President of the Board, or a Vice-President acting as President, shall inform the Board of the Bureau's recommendation to approve, reject or postpone a decision on the application, generally at the second plenary meeting of the session;

(n) With the approval of the Bureau, the President of the Board, or a Vice-President acting as President, shall present the text of a draft decision to the Board, by which the Board approves, rejects or postpones a decision on the application;

(o) The Director General shall communicate the decision of the Board to the organization concerned;

(p) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraphs (j) to (m) above, the Enlarged Bureau and the Bureau of the Board may defer their recommendations on the application pending further consultations or pending receipt of additional information or clarification.

V. Action required of the Board

12. The Board may wish to adopt the following draft decision:

“The Industrial Development Board:

(a) Takes note of the information contained in document IDB.45/20;

(b) Approves the procedures for reviewing the applications of non-governmental organizations for consultative status with UNIDO as proposed in paragraph 11 of document IDB.45/20 and annexed to this decision.”
