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English only

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**Commission on Crime Prevention  
and Criminal Justice**

**Twenty-third reconvened session**

Vienna, 4-5 December 2014

Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda\*

**Working methods of the Commission**

**Working methods of the Commission on Crime Prevention  
and Criminal Justice**

*Summary*

The present conference room paper provides advance information for consideration under sub-item (c), entitled “Working methods of the Commission”, of item 3 on strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions of the provisional agendas for the reconvened twenty-third session, as well as the twenty-fourth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. It has been prepared by the Secretariat in response to a proposal made during the regular twenty-third session of the Commission.

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\* E/CN.15/2014/1/Add.1.



## I. Introduction

1. At the twenty-third session of this Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held from 12 to 16 May 2014, a number of speakers noted that the Commission should continue improving its methods of work, especially as they pertained to the consideration of draft resolutions. In this connection, the principle of multilingualism was emphasized. Furthermore, a proposal was made to discuss the matter further at the twenty-fourth session of the Commission under item 3 (c) of its provisional agenda for that session. It was agreed that the Secretariat would seek the views of Member States on ways to improve the consideration of draft resolutions by the Commission and would make the information received available to the Commission at its next session.

2. In a note verbale dated 10 September 2014, the Secretary-General invited Member States to provide their views by 17 October 2014 on ways to improve the methods of work of the Commission in general, as well as on ways to improve the consideration of draft resolutions by the Commission in particular, for the consideration by the Commission at its twenty-fourth session under item 3 (c) of its provisional agenda.

3. By 1 December 2014, replies were received from the following countries: Pakistan, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

4. Additional information on the working methods of the Commission is included in the conference room paper, entitled “Working methods and documentation of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice” (E/CN.15/2013/CRP.12), which contains a summary of the views provided by Member States on the report of the Secretariat, entitled “Documentation prepared for the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice” (E/CN.15/2013/13) and related documentation, as well as on methods of work in general.<sup>2</sup>

## II. Comments received from Member States

### Pakistan

5. Pakistan provided the following views/comments on ways to improve the consideration of draft resolutions by the Commission:

- The number of draft resolutions to be considered at any Commission may be restricted to a certain number.
- The number of resolutions to be submitted by a country or countries of a certain Regional Group may also be restricted. It would imply that the number of resolutions from a certain Regional Group would also be restricted. There could be an equal number of resolutions allocated to each Regional Group.

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<sup>1</sup> The comments are reproduced in the form and the language in which they were received by the Secretariat.

<sup>2</sup> The document is available at the following website: [www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ\\_Sessions/CCPCJ\\_23/E-CN15-2013-CRP12\\_E.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_23/E-CN15-2013-CRP12_E.pdf)

- It must be ensured that the resolutions remain most relevant to the main theme of discussions at the Commission. A strict criterion should also be followed to ascertain if a certain resolution falls within the mandates of the Commission.
- All the draft resolutions may be submitted at least one month in advance of the Commission.
- While determining the number of resolutions to be submitted by a Regional Group, weightage should also be accorded to the size of the region as well as the relevance of the issue to that particular region.

## **Russian Federation**

6. The Russian Federation provided the following comments:

The Russian Federation proceeds from the necessity of a more effective use of the Committee of the Whole and to translate draft resolutions into all United Nations official languages in time. To this end, it is reasonable to consider the possibility to commence the meetings of the Committee of the Whole in advance of the main session (for example, a week in advance).

It is also advisable to circulate in advance draft resolutions to the States members of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for their further efficient examination and endorsement by the national experts and agencies before the meetings organized by the Commission.

## **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

7. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland provided the following views concerning ways to improve the methods of work of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. This takes into consideration the report tabled at the foresaid commission reconvened twenty-second session in December 2013 (E/CN.15/2013/CRP.12).

Reiterating some of the views expressed in that report, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would like to make the recommendations provided below concerning pre-session and in-session documentation and informal considerations of resolutions:

(a) It was suggested that draft resolutions and documents subject to discussion during the Commission should be circulated electronically in English at least three weeks prior to the start of the session, and in all six United Nations languages at least one week prior to the start of the session. Without affecting the multilinguism of the Organisation, this will afford Member States more time to thoroughly consider resolutions in advance of the session;

(b) Furthermore, it has been considered that distribution of printed copies of reports and conference room papers before and during the meeting should be rationalised as far as possible. In this regard, it has been noted the amount of printed documents being left unattended and not used, and the concurring practice by interested Member States to independently print relevant documents in advance of relevant discussions. Therefore, it is proposed that updated reports and conference

room papers are made available electronically during the Session, available to interested parties to download and print. On the other hand, we support the practice by the Secretariat of providing printed resolutions for their final consideration at the Committee of the Whole;

(c) It has been considered the need to improve the central planning of informal considerations of draft resolutions to be tabled at the Commission. Notwithstanding the considerations expressed by Canada in 2013, about the importance of ensuring inclusive discussions in the Committee of the Whole prior to informal considerations, it is suggested that:

1. The Secretariat allows for short time-bound slots in the Committee of the Whole at the beginning of the session for sponsors to present their resolutions and for member States to provide initial views. These should be kept to a maximum of 30 minutes per resolution;
2. Following the above consideration, the Secretariat should proactively allocate venues and timing for informal consideration of all resolutions starting as soon as possible following consideration in the Committee of the Whole. The Secretariat should ensure as much as possible that informal considerations are not delayed and make most use of existing logistical resources, to ensure that all resolutions can be considered in such setting in good time, thus reducing the risk of last minute informal considerations at the end of the session;

(d) Use of interpretation resources. The Secretariat and the Chair of the Committee of the Whole should plan ahead to avoid night sessions. At the 2014 session, the Committee of the Whole was adjourned at Tuesday lunchtime, and then there were night sessions later in the week, some of which took place without interpretation. It would be preferable, where possible, for Committee of the Whole sessions not to be missed during the day, and for resolutions to be considered in the Committee of the Whole during all the available time. The Chair should seek the resolutions that are most ready to be brought to the Committee of the Whole when there is time to be used, rather than all the resolutions carrying on in informals.