

Rules of Procedure for the Commission

13. The Commission considered and adopted its Rules of Procedure.

14. Delegations considered draft rules submitted by the delegations of Australia and the USSR, as well as amendments submitted by other delegations. There was considerable discussion of the draft rules relating to quorums and observers at the meetings of the Commission. Members of the Commission discussed whether it was desirable to include provision for a quorum for decision-making as well as a quorum for a session. As there was no consensus as to the requirements of the Commission on this question, it was decided to delete all provision for quorums from the draft Rules of Procedure and to discuss the matter at a future meeting if necessary. Members agreed that, in practice, it was likely that all members of the Commission would attend all meetings of the Commission. In the event of the absence of one member of the Commission from a meeting, that member could be consulted about matters to be considered at that meeting.

15. The question of observers and the nature of their participation in the meetings of the Commission was discussed at length. Rules of Procedure were adopted by the Commission on invitations to observers to meetings, their presence at sessions of the meeting, their participation in discussions and the distribution of documents submitted by them to the meeting.

16. Some delegations expressed disappointment with the provisions on observers and stated that they had joined the consensus on the understanding that once invited to a meeting there would be a presumption that observers would be able to attend sessions. Other delegations said that although the provisions were in their opinion unduly restrictive, they assumed that members of the Commission would exercise their powers under the provisions in a responsible manner. Some delegations, however, thought that the provisions were satisfactory. There was a general understanding that members of the Commission would ensure that all the rules of procedure were applied reasonably, and that, as far as possible, observers would be advised in advance, of the sessions that they would not be able to attend.