

25. As to the majority required when decisions of committees, sub-committees and working groups are taken by vote, rule 51 provides that such decisions shall be taken by a majority of the representatives of States present and voting, except that for the reconsideration of a proposal or an amendment a two-thirds majority is necessary.

IX. Promotion of general agreement

26. The matter of facilitating the successful conclusion of the work of the Conference through the promotion of general agreement was referred to by the General Assembly in the preamble to and in paragraphs 6 and 8 of resolution 39/86 as well as in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 40/76.

27. Following the references to the promotion of general agreement in the General Assembly resolutions, the draft rules of procedure elaborate in rule 63 on this matter. The rule states that the Conference shall, both at the plenary and at the Committee of the Whole stages, make every effort to reach general agreement on matters of substance, particularly on the final results of the work of the Conference, and there shall be no voting on such matters until all efforts to that end have been exhausted. The rule also states that in endeavouring to reach general agreement, all possible means shall be used. The officers of the Conference shall chair as appropriate, co-ordinate and supervise meetings with a view to enhancing the prospects of reaching general agreement. If, in the consideration of any matter of substance, no general agreement appears to be attainable, the President of the Conference is to inform the General Committee that efforts to reach general agreement have failed. The General Committee shall thereupon consider the matter and may recommend that it be decided by a vote, indicating the date of the vote, and place the question before the plenary or the Committee of the Whole as the case may be.

X. Meetings of the Conference

28. As regards meetings of the organs of the Conference for which interpretation is required, other than the Drafting Committee, the facilities available to the Conference permit the holding of meetings for a total maximum duration of three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon from Monday to Friday inclusive. Meetings of those organs (plenary; Committee of the Whole; General Committee; Credentials Committee) cannot be held simultaneously with one another. As regards working hours of the plenary and of the Committee of the Whole, the normal morning and afternoon meetings will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. respectively. The Drafting Committee and, if established, a sub-committee or working group for which interpretation is required may hold meetings for a total maximum duration of three hours a day, from Monday to Friday inclusive. For the convenience of delegations, particularly those small in size, it is suggested that, as a general rule, the meetings of the Drafting Committee and, eventually, of sub-committees or working groups should not be held simultaneously with those of the plenary or the Committee of the Whole (or the General or Credentials Committees as the case may be) but should precede and/or follow them.