

# Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs

## VNGOC Rules of Procedure. June 2015

### **RULES OF PROCEDURE**

#### **Article 1: AIMS**

1.1 The aims of the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (hereafter the VNGOC) is to support Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) work with the United Nations (UN) system on matters related to drug policy, strategy or practice.

#### **Article 2: LEGAL STATUS**

2.1 The VNGOC is a legally registered not for profit corporation under Austrian law. These Rules of Procedure are subject to all laws and regulations pertinent to the VNGOC's legal obligations under Austrian law.

#### **Article 3: MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the Wiener Drogen Komitee (Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs) is open to:

1 NGOs having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), in accordance with the rules established by ECOSOC in Resolution 1996/31 and having a permanent representative accredited to the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV);

2 NGOs named and recognized by the UN Secretary-General and having a permanent representative accredited to the UN in Vienna;

3 NGOs named and recognized by virtue of their consultative status with Specialized Agencies or other United Nations bodies and having a permanent representative accredited to the UN in Vienna;

4 NGOs operating at the international level, being not-for-profit organizations, and not having consultative status with ECOSOC but having specialized knowledge and expertise in the field of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and operating in this field;

5 NGOs operating at the national or sub-national level, being not-for-profit organizations, and not having consultative status with ECOSOC but having specialized knowledge and expertise in the field of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and operating in this field

Organizations qualifying for membership under any of the above categories are afforded full membership responsibilities and privileges given to members of the VNGOC, including full voting rights of one vote per organization.

In order to qualify for membership in the VNGOC under any of the below categories and prior to approval, applicants must demonstrate in good faith and to the satisfaction of the Board and membership, the following:

1 that the organization has a legal and administrative organizational structure that operates independently of any organization currently a member of VNGOC or applying for membership in the VNGOC; and

2 that the organization makes all decisions independently of any other organization currently a member of VNGOC or applying for membership in the VNGOC, and neither shares a mandate nor affiliation with any such organization outside of participation in a coalition or “umbrella” organization representing independent organizations.

### 3.2 Admission

Admission to the VNGOC will be based upon:

- a) an application form submitted to the Board, including confirmation that they are active in matters related to drug policy, strategy or practice
- b) independent confirmation that the organization has consultative status with ECOSOC or that it has a registered profile with UN DESA NGO Branch

### 3.3 Rights and Responsibilities

- a) Organizations in good standing are deemed to be full members with all acquired rights and privileges.
- b) Members of the VNGOC commit their organization to work within the framework of the United Nations and its Conventions, including applicable rules of procedure and spirit of intent.
- c) Members are expected to contribute to the work of the VNGOC through active and professional participation in its activities.
- d) Members have a responsibility to advance recommendations adopted by the VNGOC.

### 3.4 Termination of Membership

- a) Any member found in default of membership fees for two consecutive years will be deemed to have resigned their membership. Any member deemed as not complying with the terms of membership shall have their membership reviewed by the Board.
- b) The Board may suspend membership pending a decision on termination of Membership. Only the Committee may terminate membership. A two-thirds majority of members present is required for termination of membership.
- c) Any member whose membership is reviewed shall have the right to make representations to the Board prior to a decision to suspend, or to the Committee prior to a decision to terminate membership.

## **Article 4: STRUCTURE**

4.1 The VNGOC consists of the Committee at Large and the Executive Board.

4.2 The Committee at Large:

- a) shall meet at least three times a year, one meeting being designated the Annual General Meeting at which the normal business of the Annual General Meeting shall be conducted.
- b) shall determine the date and place of meetings. The Board may however convene the Committee at Large sooner or may postpone convening it. However, at the request of one third of the member organizations of the VNGOC, the Board shall convene the Committee at Large within four weeks after such a request is received.
- c) shall receive, consider and approve all major planning, operating and financial documents and the Report of Activities of the VNGOC as prepared by the Board.
- d) shall elect the Executive Board and may set criteria for its Board positions.
- e) shall elect two Auditors responsible for preparing the annual audited financial statements for the Committee as required by Austrian law.
- f) shall, on the recommendation of the Board, appoint the Chair of any Sub or Ad Hoc Committee, coordinators (either regional or to the main UN headquarters) or Working

Group as necessary.

4.3 The Executive Board shall consist of:

- a) Chairperson,
- b) Vice-Chairperson,
- c) Secretary,
- d) Deputy Secretary,
- e) Treasurer
- f) Deputy Treasurer

4.4 Observers at the Committee may be invited by the Board from:

- a) NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC which are not member organizations of the Committee
- b) National associations and international NGOs not having consultative status with ECOSOC, and not being member organizations of the Committee
- c) Representatives of the UN system
- d) Representatives of governments
- e) Any other person having relevance to subjects of specific interest to the Committee.

#### **Article 5: FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

5.1 The CHAIR shall

- a) convene and preside at all meetings of the Board and the Committee;
- b) maintain communication with other NGO Committees and competent groups interested in the problems of drug abuse, and with the representatives of the UN system;
- c) represent the Committee as or when required.

5.2 The VICE-CHAIR shall, in the absence of the Chair, act on his or her behalf, and perform his or her duties with the same authority as the Chair.

5.3 The SECRETARY shall:

- a) keep the minutes of the meetings of the Committee, a record of membership, records of attendance at meetings, Committee appointments and elections;
- b) arrange for the distribution of the minutes of each meeting and other written material to members and to such other persons or organizations as the Committee may decide upon.

5.4 The DEPUTY SECRETARY shall, in the absence of the Secretary, act upon his or her behalf.

5.5 The TREASURER shall:

- a) before the end of each calendar year prepare the annual budget of the VNGOC for the succeeding calendar year and shall present it, on behalf of the Board, for approval by the Committee at Large;
- b) be responsible for all disbursements and shall maintain the financial records of the VNGOC and shall report to the VNGOC on the financial status of the organization at each meeting;
- c) shall at the start of each calendar year request and collect payment of the membership fee;
- d) facilitate the annual audit of the VNGOC accounts.

5.6 The DEPUTY TREASURER shall, in the absence of the Treasurer, act upon his or her behalf.

#### **Article 6: STAFF and AD HOC CONTRACTORS**

6.1 The Board may appoint an Executive Director responsible for the operations of the VNGOC. Such appointment shall be ratified by the Committee at Large. The Executive Director shall take directions from the Board.

6.2 The Board may hire and/or engage other staff as required to undertake the work of the VNGOC and may set their remuneration within the provisions of the approved budget.

#### **Article 7: EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

7.1 The Executive Director of the VNGOC, if appointed, shall be an Ex-Officio member of the Board without voting rights.

7.2 The Board may invite other persons to attend Board meetings, without voting rights, where their participation would assist their deliberations.

#### **Article 8: FINANCES**

8.1 The financial year of the VNGOC shall be the calendar year.

8.2 The Committee at Large shall receive, consider and approve the annual budget and shall approve the annual membership fee.

8.3 The VNGOC shall elect two AUDITORS for a term of two years at the same time as elections to the Board of the VNGOC are held.

#### **Article 9: CONDUCT OF MEETINGS AND VOTING**

9.1 Decisions shall normally be made by consensus, except at the request for a vote on specific questions by any member.

9.2 Unless specified elsewhere, a quorum shall consist of at least thirty per cent (30%) of the member organizations for regular meetings. For the Annual General Meeting the quorum shall be fifty per cent (50%) but if after 30 minutes the quorum has not been established, then the members present shall represent the quorum.

9.3 Where it is necessary to vote, each Member organization in good standing shall have one vote.

9.4 All members present at the meeting shall have the right to participate in a vote. The VNGOC may adopt procedures to allow members to participate in meetings and/or vote electronically.

9.5 Participation and voting in meetings by proxy shall not be allowed.

#### **Article 10: ELECTIONS**

10.1 The Committee at Large shall appoint a Nominations Sub-Committee, consisting of at least three members.

10.2 The Nominations Sub-Committee shall:

- a) invite nominations for election to the Board of the VNGOC from all members in good standing;
- b) prepare a list of candidates who have been nominated;
- c) circulate the list of nominations to all Member Organizations of the VNGOC at least four weeks prior to the election date.

10.3 The members of the Board shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting for a term of two years. No member of the Board shall hold the same elected post for more than three consecutive terms.

10.4 The election to the Board of the VNGOC shall be by a majority of Member Organizations

present at the meeting and voting; abstentions are not considered as votes.

10.5 The two auditors will also be elected at the same meeting.

**Article 11: AMENDMENTS**

11.1 A proposal to amend these Rules can be made by a Member Organization. Only the Committee at Large can decide upon any such proposal.

11.2 Proposed amendments shall be notified to the Chairperson and shall be circulated to all Member Organizations of the VNGOC at least four weeks before its next meeting. In order to take effect, a proposed amendment must be adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the Committee at Large.

11.3 The procedures and conduct of the VNGOC and the organization of its affairs shall be undertaken in accordance with these Rules of Procedure adopted by the Committee.

**Article 12: COMING IN TO FORCE**

12.1 The present Rules of Procedure were adopted and came into force on 26 June, 2015. They replace the previous version adopted on 4 June 2012.