

## 43rd Session of the Conference

### **Introduction to Item 24: Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization**

The Conference, at its 42nd Session in June 2021, requested “the conduct of a comprehensive review on the process for reinstating voting rights for Member Nations in arrears for consideration by the relevant Governing Bodies, including the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), supported by a process of informal consultations led by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups”. The matter has gone through a two-pronged process of formal review through the Governing Bodies and informal consultations with Members over the last two years.

The 113th Session of the CCLM (25-27 October 2021) noted the practice developed by FAO was consistent with the approach taken by most other UN system organizations and was of the view that a blanket waiver of the rules regarding voting rights established by the Basic Texts should be avoided. The Council considered this Report at its 168th Session and encouraged the ICC to hold consultations with Members taking into account existing rules, the CCLM’s findings, and relevant United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions.

In the first half of 2022, I led informal consultations with the Membership whereby a draft Conference Resolution was developed and submitted to the 116th Session of the CCLM. The CCLM recommended amendments to the draft Resolution in order to align it with the Report of the 191st Session of the Finance Committee, and with these adjustments considered the draft Resolution consistent with the Basic Texts of the Organization.

The Council, at its 170th Session, then considered the draft Resolution and requested that the ICC continue the informal consultations to achieve consensus before submitting a revised version for review by the Council, through the CCLM and the Finance Committee, with a view for submission to the Conference at its 43rd Session.

Accordingly, three further informal consultations took place in late 2022, which allowed an informal consensus to be reached on the draft Resolution at the informal consultation held on 3 November 2022. This draft resolution was submitted to the 171st Session of the Council, which recommended submission to the CCLM and Finance Committee for further review. The 118th Session of the CCLM made a number of technical adjustments to the text and confirmed that the revised text was consistent with the Basic Texts of the Organization. The 195th Session of the Finance Committee agreed to submit the text, as amended by the CCLM, for the consideration of the 172nd Session of the Council.

Finally, the Council, at its 172nd Session in April 2023, recommended submission of the Draft Resolution, as reproduced in document C 2023/LIM/9, to the 43rd Session of the Conference for approval.

*Dr Hans Hoogeveen, Independent Chairperson of the Council*