

Bulletin of the Director-General and Executive Director

Standards for the preparation and submission of manuscripts of United Nations documents and publications

1. The present bulletin, which supersedes bulletins UNOV/DGB.9-ODCCP/EDB.9 of 23 May 2000 and UNOV/DGB.14-ODCCP/EDB.14 of 8 August 2002, shall come into effect on the date of its issuance.
2. Manuscripts of United Nations documents are to be prepared using text processing or desktop publishing software in strict accordance with the submission standards detailed in the present bulletin. Manuscripts shall be transmitted for processing in electronic form through the Documents Conference and Production Management System (DCPMS). For access to DCPMS, staff members should contact the Documents Management Unit.

Types of documents

3. All documents bearing a United Nations masthead should be submitted for editing by the Editorial Control Unit. In addition, a wide range of other documents, including reports, information circulars and publications, are routinely edited in order to ensure that written material published by the United Nations is consistent in terms of presentation, style and tone.
4. The attention of all drafters is drawn to the following criteria, established in administrative instruction ST/AI/189/Add.17, for deciding whether material should be issued as a United Nations publication: a document must be of public interest, reach a standard of intellectual endeavour that reflects credit on the United Nations and not substantially duplicate material that has already been published.

Submission standards

5. In order to ensure timely processing, documents and publications must meet the submission standards contained in annex I to the present bulletin. Submissions that fail to meet these standards may be returned to the submitting office by the Documents Management Unit.

How and to whom documents should be submitted

6. The final version of a manuscript and a "Request for document services" (D1) form should be submitted electronically to the Documents Management Unit through DCPMS. Any special instructions regarding processing should be included in the space provided for that purpose on the D1 form. The name, room number and extension of the consulting officer and an alternate contact person

* Reissued for technical reasons.



should also be included on the form. Consulting officers and their alternate contact persons are responsible for the content of the manuscript and for answering any queries that might arise during the processing of the manuscript. They should also review contributions submitted by entities outside the Secretariat for quality and consistency.

7. If there is a delay in the editing process as a result of a consulting officer or alternate being unavailable to answer the editor's queries, the submission date of the document will be changed accordingly.

8. If there are changes or additions to a manuscript already being processed that are deemed by the consulting officer to be absolutely necessary, they may be submitted to the Documents Management Unit, in which case they will be incorporated into the manuscript (and the submission date of the document will be changed accordingly) or considered for processing as corrigenda or addenda. Any such changes or additions should be marked clearly using the track changes option in the originally submitted manuscript.

9. Texts will be edited and prepared for publication in line with United Nations style and practice as set forth in administrative instructions and the *United Nations Editorial Manual Online*. In accordance with procedures established at United Nations Headquarters, edited documents or publications will not normally be returned to the consulting officer for review; they will be sent directly for translation, formatting and printing.

When documents should be submitted

10. Documents for consideration at a conference or meeting (also known as pre-session documents or parliamentary documents) should be submitted no later than 10 weeks prior to the start of that conference or meeting, or, in exceptional cases, by a date negotiated and agreed to with the Documents Management Unit. If a document is submitted late, the following should be kept in mind:

(a) The reasons for late submission should be included in a footnote to the document, as reiterated by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/283 B;

(b) The document will not have the same priority as documents submitted on or prior to the 10-week deadline.

11. Staff members submitting texts for processing are hereby reminded that all parliamentary documentation and publications must be forecast twice a year, through DCPMS. The forecast forms should contain information on the length of the document to be submitted, the services required (editing, translation, desktop publishing etc.) and the legislative mandate for each document. Accurate forecasts will make it easier for both submitting offices and units in the Conference Management Service to efficiently use available resources.

12. The deadline for texts other than pre-session documents is subject to the workload of all the involved units of the Conference Management Service (including the referencing, editorial, publishing, translation and reproduction services) and subject to the difficulty, length and urgency of the text concerned, among other considerations. The substantive office requesting these services may negotiate a deadline with the Documents Management Unit.

Length of documents

Documents originating in the Secretariat

13. Documents originating in the Secretariat should be no longer than 8,500 words (General Assembly resolution 52/214 B),¹ including footnotes and other references. Any document exceeding that limit must be submitted to the Documents Management Unit with a waiver, to be obtained from the Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management. Submitting officers are encouraged to contact the Documents Management Unit well before requesting a waiver in order to explore whether measures might be taken to shorten the document.

Reports of intergovernmental bodies

14. Reports of subsidiary bodies, special rapporteurs and the like must not exceed 10,700 words (General Assembly resolution 52/214 B),¹ including footnotes and other references. For documents exceeding that limit, submitting officers should contact the Documents Management Unit well in advance of requesting the waiver from the Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management. Doing so will enable the submitting office to identify, at an early stage, the steps that need to be taken in order to prepare reports, including those issued on behalf of intergovernmental and expert bodies, in accordance with the guidelines from the Secretary-General dated 21 April 2004 (annex II).

Graphic material, including maps

15. Graphic material (graphs, charts, maps etc.) that forms part of a document or publication should be submitted in digital form in one of the following formats that can be imported by Microsoft Word: JPG, TIF or EPS. All background data used to create the graphic material should be embedded in the Word or Excel manuscript file and also provided in separate files to allow complete processing of the manuscript.

16. Author departments must consult the Cartographic Section of the Department of Field Support before preparing maps for publication. All cartographic materials must be reviewed by the Cartographic Section before they are submitted for processing. The Section will provide advice on accuracy, copyright permission or notice, and disclaimers regarding political boundaries or the status of areas. For detailed guidelines on the publication of maps, see administrative instruction ST/AI/189/Add.25/Rev.1.

¹ In its resolution 52/214 B, the General Assembly referred to 16 pages with regard to documents originating in the Secretariat and to 20 pages with regard to documents of intergovernmental bodies. Subsequently, the Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management decided, in his interoffice memorandum of 15 October 2002 on the application of page limits for reports, that the word count equivalent of 16 pages was 8,500 words and the word count equivalent of 20 pages was 10,700 words.

Annex I

Submission standards

General submission standards for documents and publications

1. The following submission standards have been established in order to facilitate the editing and publishing process. For all manuscripts submitted for editing:

(a) Already published material or data should be cited accurately. Manuscripts should not contain extensive portions of text already published elsewhere, including on the Internet;

(b) Graphic material must be of good quality and copyright-free. Submitted images may be rejected on the grounds of poor quality or copyright infringement (please see para. 15 of this bulletin regarding acceptable file formats);

(c) Parliamentary documents modelled on previously edited versions of those documents should be based on the edited, not the draft, version of those documents. Authors and/or consulting officers should contact staff in the Documents Management Unit to obtain edited versions;

(d) All pages must be numbered, starting with 1;

(e) Indexes or tables of contents should not be created with the automatic index or table of contents function of Microsoft Word;

(f) The text must be presented in single-column format. All margins (top and bottom, left and right sides) must be at least 2 cm. The text should be typed in Times New Roman font;

(g) Summaries of deliberations in reports on conferences, meetings, workshops, symposiums, seminars, training courses etc. should be in reported speech and, even in the absence of summary records, should be concise;

(h) All tables, figures and annexes must have titles and be referred to in the main body of the publication or document. Tables should be numbered using arabic numerals (1, 2, 3 etc.). Figures (bar graphs, images etc.) and annexes should be numbered using roman numerals (I, II, III etc.). Figures based on Excel data should have the data linked and embedded in the submitted Word file. If this is not possible, the original Excel data files must also be submitted;

(i) If there are footnotes, they must be numbered consecutively. Excessive use of footnotes should be avoided;

(j) There should be no font in any colour other than black and no highlighting, background shading or watermarks;

(k) There should be no block caps (e.g. REPORT OF THE EXPERT WORKING GROUP);

(l) All annexes must be referred to in the main body of the document or publication;

(m) Any changes to a submitted document should be marked using the track changes option in Word. The default option of using balloons for showing insertions, deletions, formatting changes and comments should be disabled (in the options box for track changes, choose "Never" in the drop-down menu next to "Use Balloons (Print and Web Layout)").

Draft resolutions, draft decisions and other proposals

2. Texts of draft resolutions, draft decisions and proposals will be edited and prepared in line with United Nations style and practice as set forth in the *United Nations Editorial Manual Online* and the *Guidelines for Secretaries of Intergovernmental Bodies*, prepared for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management at United Nations Headquarters. Accordingly, for all draft resolutions, draft decisions and other proposals submitted for processing:

(a) The Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that the draft resolutions, draft decisions and other proposals received are in conformity with the Secretariat requirements and for informing delegates of proper procedures when such procedures are not followed;

(b) A revised text of a draft resolution, draft decision or other proposal should be issued with a .../Rev. symbol and must use the original, official text and clearly indicate all changes (including deletions and additions) to be processed. A document that is to be reissued for technical reasons should be handled in the same manner, with a marked-up text clearly showing all changes to be processed;

(c) The text must be submitted as a Word file with the appropriate masthead;

(d) The Secretary should encourage the sponsors to announce minor corrections to the text in a meeting of the body instead of issuing a formal corrigendum or a revision or reissuing the document for “technical” reasons;

(e) The sponsor of a draft resolution or draft decision should provide the title and indicate under which agenda item the draft resolution or draft decision is to be considered.

Submission standards for publications requiring cover and title pages only

3. One PDF file should be submitted containing all the inner text pages. The pages should be prepared ready for printing:

(a) Preliminary pages should be numbered in small roman numerals, italicized and centred at the bottom of each page (i, ii, iii etc.);

(b) The first page of the publication should be numbered as page 1 (often chapter I or part one).

4. The complete text for the front and back covers and title pages should be provided as a PDF file together with any photographs to be included on the cover pages (please see para. 15 of this bulletin regarding acceptable file formats). A caption, as well as any copyright information that might be needed, should be provided for each photograph.

5. Any emblem to appear on the cover should be submitted in an EPS file.

Annex II

United Nations  Nations Unies
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

TO: Please see attached list

DATE: 21 April 2004

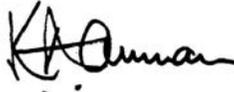
A:

REFERENCE:

THROUGH:

S/C DE:

FROM: The Secretary-General



DE:

SUBJECT: Guidelines for reports drafted and/or compiled in the Secretariat

OBJET:

1. Further to a discussion on the subject at the Steering Committee on Reform and Management meeting on 19 March 2004, attached please find the drafting guidelines for reports prepared and/or compiled in the Secretariat.
2. I am requesting you to ensure that reports prepared under your authority, including those to be issued in the name of intergovernmental and expert bodies, are drafted in strict accordance with the guidelines.
3. Please note that the Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management will convene an inter-departmental task force to monitor, evaluate and report to me on overall compliance with the drafting guidelines and page limits.
4. I count on your full cooperation in this matter and look forward to reports on accomplishments.

cc: The Deputy Secretary-General
Mr. S. Iqbal Riza
Mr. Chen Jian
Ms. Angela Kane

Drafting Guidelines for Reports not totally within the Purview of the Secretariat

Reports (including those of intergovernmental/expert bodies) should be 'action-oriented' and limited to:

- 1) A brief discussion on organizational and procedural matters
- 2) Recommendations, including resolutions and decisions adopted
- 3) Policy recommendations emanating from multi-stakeholder dialogues and panels and roundtables rather than summaries of the meetings
- 4) New developments, finding and recommendations, particularly for recurrent reports
- 5) Quotations from United Nations official documents only when citing legislative authority

Reports should not include:

- 1) Summary of statements made at opening and closing meetings, unless pertinent to conclusions reached
- 2) Summaries of statements by individuals, preferring instead to list speakers for each item
- 3) General summary of statements under each item
- 4) Analysis or information provided unless required to support policy findings
- 5) Lengthy discussion on organizational and procedural matters
- 6) Repetition of already published texts or repetition of texts with only minor changes
- 7) Extraneous information that doesn't contribute to deliberations

In drafting reports, the following also applies:

- 1) Biennialization, triennialization and consolidation of reports are not a priori reasons to exceed page limits