

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Contents

1. How is the Bureau elected?	3
2. Why does the Fifth Committee have three sessions and how are they structured?	4
3. The Fifth Committee always seems to have to extend its work; why does it not set a more reasonable schedule from the beginning?	5
4. What is the relationship between the Fifth Committee and ACABQ?	7
5. How does the Fifth Committee work with the General Assembly and its other Main Committees?	7
6. What is a PBI?	8
7. What is a revised estimate?	8
8. What appointments take place in the Fifth Committee?	8
9. What is the Fifth Committee process from introduction of reports to adoption of a draft resolution?	9
10. What is the difference between “formal”, “informal” and “informal informal” meetings?	12
11. What is a “skeleton” or “skeletal resolution”?	13
12. What is Rev.1 and who prepares it?	14
13. What is the general process of the “first and second reading” of a draft text?	14
14. What is the practice for using the terms “also” and “further” at the beginning of operative paragraphs?	17
15. What is the practice for using the paragraph indicators “alt” or “bis”, etc. in draft resolutions?	17
16. What is the difference between the phrases “decides to reduce resources for ... by 5 per cent” and “decides to further reduce resources for ... by 5 per cent”?	18
17. What terms does the Fifth Committee use when taking action on reports?	19
18. What is the meaning of the phrase “The Committee takes its decisions by consensus”?	19
19. What is the meaning of adopting a paragraph “ad ref”?	20
20. What is the difference between a “chair’s text”, a “coordinator’s text” and a “negotiators’ text”?	21
21. What is the difference between ‘deferral’ and ‘no action’?	21
22. What is the difference between resolutions and decisions?	22
23. Where can I find copies of presentations provided by Secretariat officials as well as official statements made during formal meetings?	23
24. What is Fifth Committee Place and how can I obtain access?	23
25. I am listed on the official Fifth Committee membership document, but I am not receiving notifications. What do I need to do to receive notifications?	24
26. How can I receive notifications from Fifth Committee place or fifthcommittee@un.org? How do I receive emails from coordinators? How do I unsubscribe?	24

Disclaimer:

Please note that this document is an **informal working paper**.

The working practices of the Committee are not codified; they are informal in nature and subject to development over time and interpretation by the Committee.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



1. How is the Bureau elected?

Each Main Committee elects a **Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur**. These officers shall be elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence (rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly).

The post of Chair, as well as the other posts on the Bureau, rotate among the groups, with the post of Rapporteur being occupied by a member of the regional group that occupied the post of Chair in the previous session.

Rule 30 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly specifies that the General Assembly shall hold elections at least three months before the opening of the session over which they are to preside.

In its resolution [72/313](#), the Assembly decided to establish the pattern for the rotation of the Chairs of the Main Committees for the forthcoming 10 sessions of the General Assembly, namely from the seventy-fourth to the eighty-third session, as set forth in the table below. It also decided to prepare arrangements concerning the rotation of the Chairs of the Main Committees for the following sessions no later than at its eighty-second session.

Table 1: Pattern for the rotation of the Chairs of the Main Committees of the General Assembly

Session	First Committee	Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)	Second Committee	Third Committee	Fifth Committee	Sixth Committee
Seventy-fourth	Latin American and Caribbean States	Asia-Pacific States	African States	Western and other States	European States	Asia-Pacific States
Seventy-fifth	Western and other States	European States	African States	Asia-Pacific States	Eastern States	European States
Seventy-sixth	African States	Latin American and Caribbean States	Western and other States	European States	African States	Eastern States
Seventy-seventh	Asia-Pacific States	Asia-Pacific States	Eastern States	European States	Latin American and Caribbean States	Western and other States
Seventy-eighth	Eastern States	European States	African States	Latin American and Caribbean States	Western and other States	African States
Seventy-ninth	Latin American and Caribbean States	Eastern States	European States	Asia-Pacific States	African States	Latin American and Caribbean States
Eightieth	Western and other States	European States	Latin American and Caribbean States	African States	Asia-Pacific States	Eastern States
Eighty-first	Asia-Pacific States	African States	Eastern States	European States	Western and other States	African States
Eighty-second	Eastern States	European States	Asia-Pacific States	Asia-Pacific States	Latin American and Caribbean States	Western and other States
Eighty-third	African States	Latin American and Caribbean States	Latin American and Caribbean States	Eastern States	European States	Asia-Pacific States

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



2. Why does the Fifth Committee have three sessions and how are they structured?

The Fifth Committee's annual work follows a structure shaped by recurring reporting mandates, established practice and the budgetary cycle. During each session of the General Assembly (a period of 12-months starting in September), the Committee considers a broad range of administrative, financial, and oversight items on annual, biennial or multi-year schedules. These items span the full scope of the Committee's mandate, including internal oversight, programme planning, audit and accountability, human resources management, peacekeeping financing, and the proposed programme budget.

The Fifth Committee conducts its work in **three parts per session of the General Assembly**. During the **main part of the session** of the General Assembly (October–December), the Committee considers most of its agenda items, including many time-bound issues such as the exceptions under Art.19 of the Charter and the proposed programme budget for the following year. Items that do not require immediate attention may be deferred to the **first part of the resumed session** in March, which lasts five weeks pursuant to resolution [77/267](#). The Committee also holds a **second part of the resumed session** in May to examine the administrative and budgetary aspects of UN peacekeeping, in accordance with resolution [49/233 A](#), as well as any additional questions requiring its attention. In addition to the generic structure, ad-hoc items, in particular budgetary ones, may be added to any session as needed.

Main Part of the Session (October–December)

During the main part of the session, the Committee addresses most financial, oversight, and budget-cycle items, especially those tied to fixed annual deadlines. Items typically considered include:

- **Proposed programme budget (regular budget)**, consisting of regular budget fascicles and related reports;
- **Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget**, such as the budget for special political missions, capital projects at duty stations away from Headquarters, information and communications technology strategy, Umoja/ERP, revised estimates, programme budget implications, performance reports and other matters;
- **Programme planning**, including the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and programme plans;
- **Reports from Oversight bodies**, including the financial reports and audited financial statements of the Board of Auditors and related reports on the implementation of recommendations; reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS); and the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC);
- Matters related to the **Common System** and the **Joint Staff Pension Fund**, including the reports of the International Civil Service Commission and Pension Fund Board; and
- **Other recurring items**, such as the reports on the scale of assessment, pattern of conferences and on the activities of the Ethics Office.

First Resumed Session (March)

The first resumed session typically focuses on human resources management, administrative and coordination items and selected recurring operational items. Items typically considered include:

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



- **Human Resources**, including HRM management overview, composition of the Secretariat (staff demographics and system of desirable ranges); disciplinary matters and possible criminal conduct; and ad-hoc submissions, such as amendments to Staff Regulations and Rules and seconded active-duty personnel;
- **Administrative and Coordination Items**, including accountability and system-wide coordination and oversight (including annual reports of the Joint Inspection Unit and Chief Executives Board-related budgetary coordination); and
- **Operational matters**, such as the biennial reports on supply chain activities and the standards of accommodation for air travel.

Second Resumed Session (May)

The second resumed session is **devoted primarily to the administrative and budgetary aspects of peacekeeping operations**, forming a consolidated review of peacekeeping financing for the year. Items typically considered include:

- **Proposed budgets and performance reports for all active peacekeeping mission and support components**, namely the support account, the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi and the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe;
- **Oversight reports related to peacekeeping operations**, including those of the Board of Auditors, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Independent Audit Advisory Committee; and
- **Cross-cutting peacekeeping issues**, such as contingent-owned equipment, reimbursement for troop- and police-contributing countries, special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, and the status of closed missions.

3. The Fifth Committee always seems to have to extend its work; why does it not set a more reasonable schedule from the beginning?

The Fifth Committee's schedule is prepared in line with decisions of the General Assembly, and is subject to several constraints, including the meeting schedule and entitlements approved by the Assembly.

At the beginning of each session, **the Assembly decides on the official closing dates of the General Assembly**, including **the date of its recess** (i.e. the date when the main part of the session is to end), **as well as the closing date of the Fifth Committee during the main session** (which usually falls on the working day prior to the day of the Assembly's recess). Those dates are aligned with the so-called "**13-week rule**", stemming from General Assembly [resolution 1898 \(XVIII\)](#), in which the Assembly stressed that its work should be carried out as efficiently and expeditiously as possible and that, save in quite exceptional cases, the duration of regular sessions should not exceed thirteen weeks. The Assembly subsequently decided that this "13-week" period should not be changed and that, in any case, the session should end before Christmas (para. 4 of annex IV to the rules of procedure).

The Calendar of Conferences, which is approved by the Assembly, sets out the Committee's meeting entitlements, including the number of fully serviced meetings, conference rooms and their tentative dates. It is recalled that Fifth Committee is entitled to five weeks of meetings during the first part of its resumed session and four weeks during the second part of the resumed session.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Beyond these broad parameters, a number of practical factors influence the actual scheduling of the Committee's work. These include the availability of documentation and the need to act on time-sensitive issues, such as requests for exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Main part of the session practice

At the beginning of each main session, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, sets the official closing date for each Main Committee. The Fifth Committee is normally scheduled to close last, typically in early to mid-December.

In practice, however, the Fifth Committee is rarely able to conclude its work by that date. Many reports are introduced only in late November or even December, and the Committee must also consider programme budget implications (PBIs) arising from Plenary or other Main Committees. Decision 34/401 sets a **mandatory deadline** that all draft resolutions with PBIs be submitted to the Fifth Committee no later than 1 December. The decision also provides that the Main Committee should allow sufficient time for the preparation of the estimate of expenditures by the Secretariat for its consideration by ACABQ and the Fifth Committee. Thus, even if submitted on 1 December, additional time is required for the necessary documentation to become available and for the Committee to consider the matter. As a result, December is usually the busiest period for Fifth Committee delegations, with questions and answers sessions continuing on several agenda items while negotiations on others intensify.

Because much of this work must take place in formally serviced meetings with interpretation, the Committee traditionally needs to request an extension of its session through a letter from the Chair to the President of the General Assembly. The Assembly **must formally approve this request** through a decision to postpone the date of the recess of the session and the extension of the work of the Fifth Committee. Only at that time can the Committee update its programme of work and schedule meetings beyond the original closing date. Extensions are often requested to a date that would enable the Assembly to adopt the Fifth Committee's recommendations, at the latest on the working day immediately preceding Christmas, before adjourning for the recess.

Resumed sessions practice

The Committee normally concludes its work on time during the first part of its resumed session.

During the second part of the resumed session, however, the Fifth Committee is often unable to complete its work within the four weeks allocated, due to the extremely heavy workload. Unlike the situation in December, by the end of those four weeks the Committee has normally managed to introduce all reports, complete Q&A, and conduct a first and second reading of all draft resolutions (Rev.1s). What typically remains at that stage is negotiations.

These negotiations take place in an "informal-informal" setting and therefore do not require formally serviced meetings. As a result, it is not normally necessary to request an official extension of the session. However, after the four-week period, the Fifth Committee is no longer entitled to meeting services or conference facilities, including rooms for informal-informal meetings. Any requests for meeting rooms for ad-hoc additional negotiations beyond the four-week period can only be accommodated subject to the availability of conference rooms. It is recalled that June is traditionally a busy period with many bodies in session, including Fifth Committee subsidiary bodies such as CPC and the Committee on Contributions. Once consensus has been reached on all items, the Committee typically requests a single three-hour meeting, scheduled on an "as available basis," to formally conclude its work and close the session. "As available basis" means that the meeting is scheduled once conference services, including a room, interpretation and conference officers, can be accommodated.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



In this connection, the Assembly, in its pattern of conferences resolutions, has continued to express concern regarding the recurring extension of the work of the Fifth Committee during the second part of the resumed session and the impact of such an extension on the services provided by the Secretariat, including availability of conference rooms and language services.

4. What is the relationship between the Fifth Committee and ACABQ?

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) is a **subsidiary body of the General Assembly**. Its role is defined in rule 157 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, which states:

"The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions shall be responsible for expert examination of the programme budget of the United Nations and shall assist the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee)."

In fulfilling this mandate, ACABQ reviews the proposals submitted by the Secretary-General and makes **conclusions and recommendations** (highlighted in bold in its reports). It also examines, on behalf of the General Assembly, the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies, proposals for financial arrangements with those agencies, and the reports of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies.

Under the established working methods of the Fifth Committee, the conclusions and recommendations of ACABQ form the basis of the initial draft resolutions and decisions considered by the Committee. The Committee begins its negotiations from an initial position of endorsing the conclusions and recommendations of ACABQ, subject to any proposals by individual delegations to amend or disregard specific recommendations.

5. How does the Fifth Committee work with the General Assembly and its other Main Committees?

Rule 153 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly sets out the relationship between the General Assembly and the Fifth Committee:

"No resolution involving expenditure shall be recommended by a committee for approval by the General Assembly unless it is accompanied by an estimate of expenditures prepared by the Secretary-General. No resolution in respect of which expenditures are anticipated by the Secretary-General shall be voted by the General Assembly until the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee) has had an opportunity of stating the effect of the proposal upon the budget estimates of the United Nations."

Regulation 5.9 of the *Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget and Evaluation* (ST/SGB/2018/3) further establishes that:

"No council, commission or other competent body shall take a decision involving either a change in the programme budget approved by the General Assembly or the possible requirement of expenditure unless it has received and taken account of a report from the Secretary-General on the programme budget implications of the proposal."

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



On some occasions, Main Committees draft resolutions using the phrase “within available resources.” In its resolution 54/249, the Assembly endorsed conclusions and recommendations of ACABQ the term (see A/54/7), in particular its concern about the use of this phrase and its potential implications for resource utilization and its emphasis on the Secretariat having to accurately inform the General Assembly and its Main Committees whether sufficient resources exist to implement any new activity.

6. What is a PBI?

PBI stands for **programme budget implication**. A PBI is a statement outlining the administrative, financial, and programmatic implications that would result from the adoption of a draft resolution. Once a PBI is issued, ACABQ reviews it and provides its observations and recommendations for the Fifth Committee’s consideration.

At least 48 hours must elapse before action can be taken on a draft resolution that has budgetary implications, to allow time for the Secretary-General to prepare the PBI and for ACABQ to examine it. For this reason, draft resolutions with financial implications must be submitted to the Fifth Committee no later than 1 December, in accordance with paragraphs 12 and 13 of decision 34/401.

7. What is a revised estimate?

A **revised estimate** is a proposal submitted by the Secretary-General requesting additional resources beyond those included in the proposed programme budget or approved in the programme budget.

Rule 102.4 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations (ST/SGB/2013/4) specifies that:

“Revised and supplementary programme budget proposals may be submitted in the following instances:

- a) When, in the interest of peace and security, urgent approval is required;*
- b) When they include activities which the Secretary-General considers to be of the highest urgency and which could not have been foreseen at the time the initial programme budget proposals were prepared;*
- c) In respect of decisions taken by the General Assembly;*
- d) In respect of decisions taken by the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council or the Trusteeship Council;*
- e) When they cover activities mentioned in earlier programme budget proposals as items for which later submissions would be made;*
- f) When they involve changes in expenditure requirements associated with inflation and currency fluctuations.”*

8. What appointments take place in the Fifth Committee?

Appointments or confirmation of appointments to the following subsidiary bodies take place in the Fifth Committee:

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



- Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
- Board of Auditors
- Committee on Contributions
- Investments Committee
- United Nations International Civil Service Commission
- United Nations Staff Pension Committee
- Independent Audit Advisory Committee

Vacancies are generally announced in **early March**. Such announcements are issued in notes by the Secretary-General under the agenda item “**Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments.**”

Member States and/or regional Groups submit nominations and endorsements to the Secretary-General. The Bureau of the incoming session then proposes a date for the elections, **typically the first Friday in November**, as well as a deadline for the submission of candidatures.

Information on candidatures and other election-related details is made available on **CandiWeb** and in the **e-Candidatures and Elections module** on e-deleGATE (password required).

The conduct of elections in the Fifth Committee is governed by **Articles 18 and 19 of the United Nations Charter**, as well as **rules 103, 132 and 133** of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly. In addition, the Committee observes specific practices, including the **restriction of ballots to candidates received by the established nomination deadline**.

9. What is the Fifth Committee process from introduction of reports to adoption of a draft resolution?

The work of the Fifth Committee generally takes place in **three distinct but interconnected phases**:

- A. Formal introduction,**
- B. Informal consultations and negotiations, and**
- C. Formal adoption.**

A. Formal Introduction

The process begins in a **formal meeting** of the Committee, held in Conference Room 3 of UNHQ. During this meeting, representatives of the **Secretary-General**, or, depending on the agenda item, representatives from other entities such as the **Board of Auditors (BoA)** or the **Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)**, introduce one or more reports. These interventions typically consist of **brief, concise statements** highlighting key findings, recommendations, or proposed actions.

Immediately following the introductory statements, the **Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)** introduces its corresponding report. ACABQ's reports are a central part of

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



the process since its recommendations form the starting point for much of the Committee's subsequent consideration.

Once the Secretariat and ACABQ have completed their introductions, the floor is opened to **Member States**. The speaking order traditionally begins with **groups and delegations speaking on behalf of multiple Member States**, beginning with the Group of 77 and China, followed by others, such as the African Group or the EU (in order of inscription), followed by interventions from **individual delegations**. In those statements Member States often articulate general positions, indicate priorities or areas of concern, and request further clarifications on specific aspects of the reports. The views expressed during this phase often set the tone and direction for the negotiations that follow.

B. Informal consultations and negotiations

This phase is where the majority of the substantive work occurs and where the Committee, under the guidance of a coordinator appointed by the Bureau, seeks to reach consensus on the resolution.

Questions-and-Answers session(s)

The first stage in this phase usually starts with an **informal consultation** dedicated to **Questions-and-Answers (Q&A)**, held usually in Conference room 3. During Q&A, Member States seek clarification from participating officials on various aspects of the reports, ask for elaboration on technical issues, or request additional data. Some of the responses are provided orally during the meeting itself; others are transmitted in writing, as **supplementary information**. For larger or more complex items (e.g. the proposed programme budget) Q&A may take place over several meetings. Given that informal consultations are closed meetings, a **"witness list"** circulated before the meeting will detail all attending officials.

At the conclusion of Q&A, the coordinator begins the **first and second reading** (see *below*) of the **skeletal draft resolution** (see *below*). For urgent items, or for straight-forward items where there is a clear emerging consensus, consideration may be given to adopting an outcome based on the skeletal draft resolution, with any required amendment at this meeting. More typically, at the end of the meeting the coordinator then sets **deadlines** for the process: i.e., for Member States to submit any additional questions, for the Secretariat to provide its responses, and, crucially, for Member States to submit language for the draft resolution.

The language submission is oftentimes linked to the timely receipt of the Secretariat's written responses. If key responses are delayed, delegations may request an extension of the deadline to submit language so they can submit informed proposals.

Circulation of Rev.1 and Negotiations

Once delegations have submitted their language, the **initial draft resolution**, commonly referred to as **Rev.1**, is circulated and the Committee reconvenes in informal consultations to conduct a **first and second reading**, this time of Rev.1. During the reading, delegations may pose questions or request clarifications to the language proponents or provide comments on the language contained in Rev.1. Relevant officials are also available in the room, in case there are questions from delegations on the language contained in Rev.1. The Committee also may proceed to adopt paragraphs of Rev.1 during the reading (see also *below*).

Following the reading of Rev.1, the process enters the period of **negotiations**, oftentimes in **"informal informals"** or **"informal informal informals."** (see *below*). This is the heart of the negotiating process, where delegations work together to reach consensus. These discussions may stretch across weeks or even months, depending on the complexity of the item and the political sensitivities involved.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Once consensus has been reached, the coordinator notifies the Secretariat so that it can prepare the **clean (or final) version** of the draft resolution. For budget-related items, this stage may require **substantial additional time**, often 24 hours or more, as it can involve complex calculations carried out by the Budget Office.

Informal adoption of the draft resolution

If time permits, the coordinator convenes a **final informal consultation** to informally adopt the agreed outcome. However, due to the high volume of work and the compressed timelines that often define the Committee's sessions, it is not uncommon that this may take place late at night, without interpretation and with only the presence of the Fifth Committee Secretariat. Alternatively, the step is skipped, and the item moves directly to the formal adoption stage from the "informal-informals". More recently, the Committee has also relied on a "**silence procedure**" approach, whereby the coordinator circulates the agreed draft and communicate that it is to be considered adopted if no delegation raises an objection within a specified timeframe.

C. Formal Adoption

The final phase of the process is the **formal adoption** of the draft resolution in a formal meeting of the Fifth Committee. This usually occurs on the **final day of the session**. Because agreements on the text of many items are arrived at shortly before the closing meeting, the draft resolutions and decisions are frequently available only as **unedited, English-only advance versions**. The Secretariat completes the editing and translation **after** the formal meeting.

Through this last step, the Committee formally adopts the negotiated outcome, and the draft resolution proceeds to the plenary of the General Assembly for final adoption.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Figure 1: Fifth Committee Process overview

	Formal introduction	Informal consultations and negotiation process				Formal adoption	GA action on Fifth Committee reports
		1st informal consultation	2nd informal consultation	(varied)	3rd informal consultation (time permitting)		
Actions	Introduction of reports by the Secretariat, ACABQ and other actors Statements by Member States	Q&A on reports First and second reading of the skeletal Setting of deadlines <i>(Any language agreed upon is considered "adopted")</i>	Introduction of language 1st reading Negotiations 2nd reading <i>(Any language agreed upon is considered "adopted")</i>	Negotiations among Member States <i>Often times in "informal-informal" or "informal-informal-informal consultations"</i>	Informal adoption of outstanding paragraphs, followed by adoption of resolution as a whole <i>(Any language agreed upon is considered "adopted")</i>	Formal adoption of all draft resolutions Statements by Member States	
Roles	Chaired by Chair or Vice-Chairs Full Secretariat support	Chaired by Coordinators of item/question Full Secretariat support	Chaired by Coordinators of item/question Full Secretariat support	Depending on negotiator preference	Chaired by Coordinator of item/question 5C Secretariat support	Chaired by Chair or Vice-Chairs Full Secretariat support	
Guiding Principles	Rules of procedure of the Assembly, relevant resolutions and decisions	Working practices and methods of the Committee Rules of procedure of the Assembly, relevant resolutions and decisions				Rules of procedure of the Assembly, relevant resolutions and decisions	
Facilities and services	Interpretation provided (6 languages) Held during official UN working hours Details reflected in POW, Journal and iGov Location: Conference Rooms Open meeting • Live webcast • Live list of speakers (prior inscription) • Summary Records • Meetings Coverage	Interpretation provided (6 languages) Held during official UN working hours Details reflected in POW Location: Conference Rooms Closed meeting • Member States, • Participating officials ("witness list")	Interpretation provided (6 languages) Held during official UN working hours Details reflected in POW Location: Conference Rooms Closed meeting • Member States, • Participating officials ("witness list")	No Interpretation Location varies May happen at any time of the day/night	Interpretation provided (6 languages) Held during official UN working hours Details reflected in POW Location: Conference Rooms Closed meeting • Member States, • Participating officials ("witness list")	Interpretation provided (6 languages) Held during official UN working hours Details reflected in POW, Journal and iGov Location: Conference Rooms Open meeting • Live webcast • Live list of speakers (prior inscription) • Summary Records • Meetings Coverage	

10. What is the difference between "formal", "informal" and "informal informal" meetings?

Formal meetings and informal consultations of the Committee take place during regular working hours (10AM-1PM and 3-6PM). They benefit from interpretation into all official languages of the United Nations, are webcast, and are reflected in the *UN Journal* and iGov as well as the Committee's programme of work.

The proceedings of **formal meetings** are reflected in the report of the Committee as well as the summary records which provide an account of the proceedings, including views expressed by speakers and decisions taken. Fifth Committee summary records are prepared by DGACM and are published in the six official languages. They carry the symbol A/C.5/XX/SR.X, XX being the session and X being the meeting number (e.g. A/C.5/79/SR.1 for the first meeting of the Fifth Committee in the main part of the 79th session).

In contrast, discussions in **informal consultation** are *off the record*, allowing delegations to engage more freely.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Informal informal consultations take place without interpretation and, depending on the Committee's preference, with or without Secretariat presence. They may also be held outside regular working hours and may or may not be reflected in the programme of work.

Some also use the term "**informal informal informal consultations**" (or "going offline") to refer to discussions held *without the Secretariat* and involving *only those delegations directly engaged in a specific negotiation*.

11. What is a "skeleton" or "skeletal resolution"?

A "**skeleton**" or "**skeletal resolution**" is circulated by the coordinator to facilitate the development of Rev.1. It contains only a limited number of standard paragraphs.

Key considerations for skeletal resolutions

- The **skeletal resolution is a tool, not a requirement**.
The coordinator proposes it to facilitate the work of the Committee. Member States may propose (in the context of their language submission) that a skeleton paragraph be deleted or amended.
- A **skeletal resolution is not always intended to be a complete resolution**.
In some instances, the skeleton contains all the elements needed for adoption. In others, additional language must be submitted by delegations; otherwise, the resulting draft would lack substantive content.
- There is **no "one-size-fits-all "standard skeletal resolution"**.
Practices vary by agenda item and have evolved over time, depending on the nature of each issue.
- **The coordinator is the "owner" of the skeleton**.
While the Secretariat prepares an initial draft, the coordinator decides on the overall draft and which paragraphs are ultimately included.

Although practices vary by agenda item, skeletons generally include the minimum procedural **preambular and operative paragraph**, namely:

- *Recalling....*(recalling previous relevant resolutions);
- *Having considered ...* (all related documents formally introduced);
- *Takes note ...* (of the relevant reports of the Secretary-General and other entities, though normally **not** the ACABQ report, with some exceptions);
- *Endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the ACABQ* (where applicable).

In that regard it is important to recall the long-standing practice of the Committee to start from a position of endorsement of the conclusions and recommendations of ACABQ. Where Member States disagree, they will indicate so in the context of their language to be incorporated into Rev.1.

Additionally, based on practice, the following paragraphs are typically included as well:

- **Resolutions with financial implications:** Technical financial language covering posts, non-post resources, and related elements, *technically reflecting ACABQ recommendation*;

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



- **Peacekeeping financing resolutions (and some others):** Technical language on the financing of the appropriation and/or the applicable scale of assessment;
- **Resolutions concerning audit opinions and findings of the Board of Auditors:** An operative paragraph that: *Takes note of the audit opinions and findings, and endorses the recommendations contained in the reports of the Board of Auditors;*
- **Resolutions relating to recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC):** Technical language reflecting the recommendations of the Commission;
- **Resolutions relating to Article 19 of the Charter:** Standard language on the application of Article 19, as well as a paragraph determining **which Member States shall be permitted to vote**, reflecting the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions.

12. What is Rev.1 and who prepares it?

The Fifth Committee typically begins negotiations on the basis of “**Rev.1**”, an initial draft resolution that contains **all language submitted by Member States** by a set deadline. To prepare for Rev.1, the Committee first considers a **skeletal resolution**, which includes only a small number of standard paragraphs (see above) and agrees to a deadline for submissions of language to be incorporated into Rev.1.

Once the language deadline has passed, the Secretariat of the Fifth Committee compiles every proposal submitted, indicating the proponent of each paragraph in comment boxes. The coordinator then reviews, clears, and circulates the draft as Rev.1.

Because Rev.1 incorporates the *totality* of submissions, it is often **very lengthy**, with multiple similar, overlapping, or even contradictory paragraphs. It is common to find several competing versions of the same paragraph, sometimes differing by only a few words, labelled as “*alt*,” “*bis*,” “*ter*,” “*quater*,” etc. The largest Rev.1 is typically the **proposed programme budget**, which at the 79th and 80th sessions contained **750 and 823 paragraphs**, respectively. The **special political missions (SPMs)** resolution follows in size, with **366 and 219 paragraphs** at those same sessions.

This approach differs from that of many other intergovernmental bodies, where initial drafts are frequently prepared by facilitators or by a small group of interested delegations, resulting in texts that are more concise and manageable.

As negotiations progress and the language contained in Rev.1 is refined, the coordinator may, with the assistance of the Fifth Committee Secretariat (which updates the text during informal consultations) issue successive revisions (Rev.2, Rev.3, etc.) to reflect all amendments. Alternatively, the Committee may opt to exchange proposals through other formats, such as consolidated tables that present the positions of delegations.

13. What is the general process of the “first and second reading” of a draft text?

When considering a draft text, the Committee will go through a first and second reading, initially for the skeletal resolution, followed by Rev.1. For urgent or straightforward items where there is a clear consensus, an outcome may be adopted on the basis of the skeletal draft resolution, with any required amendments at

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



that meeting. In such cases, no additional language would be submitted and, consequently, no Rev.1 would be issued.

Before setting a deadline for language submission, the coordinator will normally do a first and second reading of the skeletal resolution, depending on the availability of time and agreement of the Committee.

First and second reading of the “skeletal resolution”

SKELETAL	First reading: • Goal: Comprehension of language, in particular technical and financial ➔ Question asked by coordinator: “Are there any questions?”
	Second reading: • Goal: Substantive discussion of language and possible adoption ➔ Questions asked by coordinator: “Are there any comments? Can we adopt?”

The objectives of the reading of a skeletal resolution are:

1) *First reading: comprehension of language (“Are there any **questions?**”)*

During the first reading, the coordinator will go through the text (paragraph by paragraph, more frequently, page by page) and **ask whether there are any questions**. This is to make sure that all participants understand the technicalities of the language. During the first reading, the merit of a specific paragraph is not discussed as this will happen during the second reading.

2) *Second reading: substantive discussion of language (“Are there any **comments? Can we adopt?**”)*

In the second reading, the coordinator will again go through the text, this time paragraph by paragraph (this *cannot* be done page by page) and will normally **ask whether there are any comments**. In the absence of any request for the floor, the coordinator will normally **move to propose to adopt a paragraph** (which will frequently prompt a reaction).

While sometimes there is appetite to adopt a few skeletal paragraphs delegations frequently ask that certain paragraphs or the skeletal as a whole be put in brackets. While there is no formal definition of “bracketing”, placing text in brackets indicates that the language is not yet agreed and remains under negotiation pending consensus.

The Committee may not always do a first and/or second reading of the skeletal resolution, for instance if time runs out or if delegations express the wish to wait with a second reading until after language is submitted. If no reading takes place at this stage, it can take place at the same time as the reading of Rev.1.

Once Rev.1 has been compiled to contain all language submitted by delegations, the coordinator will call for another meeting, through the Bureau, to conduct the first and second reading of Rev.1.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



First and second reading of "Rev.1"

REV.1	First reading: • Goal: Introduction of main elements of language by proponents Second reading: • Goal: Substantive discussion of language and possible adoption ➔ Questions asked by coordinator: "Are there any questions or comments? Can we adopt?"
-------	--

In theory and past Fifth Committee practice, the coordinator would initially invite language proponents to introduce their language in one single intervention, in the order in which the language was submitted. After that, they would guide the Committee through the first reading of Rev.1, paragraph by paragraph (allowing clarification questions to the language proponent(s) or to the Secretariat), followed by the second reading of Rev.1, paragraph by paragraph (allowing delegations to discuss the merit of every paragraph and potentially adopt or bracket it).

Over the years, owing to scarcity of time, the Committee has moved towards an "abbreviated" approach to the reading: it frequently considers the introduction of language as first reading, allowing more time to focus on unadopted and/or new language (highlighted in bold) in the second reading.

The objectives of the "abbreviated" reading of Rev.1 are:

1) First reading: introduction of language

The coordinator will give the floor to all proponents to **introduce their language** in one single intervention, in the order in which the language was submitted. Proponents are encouraged to highlight the main elements of their language and explain their position to set the context for the following negotiations.

1) Second reading: substantive discussion of language ("Are there any **questions or comments? Can we adopt?**")

The coordinator will go through Rev.1 paragraph by paragraph (considering alts together), inviting both clarification questions as well as discussion of the substance. In addition to asking questions, delegations may discuss the merits of a paragraph, signal support, or request that a paragraph be placed in brackets. Language proponents may also take the floor to withdraw specific paragraph(s), including in favour of a separately proposed paragraph. In the absence of requests for the floor, the coordinator may proceed to propose the **adoption of a paragraph. While the second reading should result in agreement on an agreed draft, often it is not possible to reach overall agreement due to time constraints, given the overall heavy agenda, and the volume of proposals, whether similar or contrary, in each draft resolution.**

In some instances, particularly when considering long draft resolutions, the Committee may decide to **"put the entire text into brackets"**. This allows the Committee to proceed through the document (often page by page or chapter by chapter) and engage in a more open and candid discussion, without the immediate pressure of adopting language.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



14. What is the practice for using the terms “also” and “further” at the beginning of operative paragraphs?

When multiple consecutive operative paragraphs use **the same operative verb** (e.g., *requests*, *decides*, *calls upon*) **with the same subject and object**, the UN editorial standard applies the following sequence:

In the first appearance of an operative verb, just the verb is used, ie:

Requests the Secretary-General to....

In the paragraph immediately following, the word also is added, ie:

Also requests the Secretary-General to...

In the paragraph immediately following, the word further is added, ie:

Further requests the Secretary-General to...

Should the next paragraph also start with the same operative word, it goes back to “requests” and then repeats the above.

When the Secretariat of the Fifth Committee receives language submissions from delegations to include in a draft resolution, it will apply this rule when time allows it. Once a draft resolution is submitted to DGACM for editing and translating, editors perform a **full quality-control review** and ensure the correct editorial sequencing (*requests* / *also requests* / *further requests*) is applied consistently. Where delegations wish to express that “another” or “repeated” request is made to the Secretary-General, they normally would use formulations such as ‘reiterates or reaffirms its request’ or similar formulations. These are used when the intent is *substantively* different from the normal editorial sequencing.

15. What is the practice for using the paragraph indicators “alt” or “bis”, etc. in draft resolutions?

The indicator “alt” (“alternative”) is normally used if paragraphs submitted by different proponents are similar, (partially or fully) contradicting or generally relate to the same substance matter. Ultimately, “alt” is used to reflect the idea that only one version of the alternative paragraphs would be expected to remain in the final text. Accordingly, it is also the practice of the Committee to consider alternative paragraphs together in the second reading of a draft resolution as the adoption of one would exclude the other(s).

Example:

X. *Decides* to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post, one Programme Management Officer (P-3) post and one General Service (Other level) post; *[Proponent 1]*

X.alt.1 *Decides* not to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post, one Programme Management Officer (P-3) post and one General Service (Other level) post; *[Proponent 2]*

X.alt.2 *Decides* to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post; *[Proponent 3]*

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



The Latin numeral indicators “bis”, “ter”, etc. are often used to help with clustering complex alternative scenarios, in which groups of paragraphs are alternatives to other (groups of) paragraphs.

Example:

X. *Decides* to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post, one Programme Management Officer (P-3) post and one General Service (Other level) post; [Proponent 1]

X.alt.1 *Decides* to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post; [Proponent 2]

X.alt.1.bis *Also decides* to establish one Programme Management Officer (P-3) post [Proponent 2]

X.alt.1.ter *Further decides* to establish one General Service (Other level) post; [Proponent 2]

X.alt.2 *Decides* not to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post; [Proponent 3]

In this example, “bis” and “ter” indicate that the three alt.1 paragraphs together are alternatives to the two other paragraphs. They are grouped together as they cannot be separate alts (paragraphs of the same proponent can never be alts).

Latin numeral indicators are also used where an additional paragraph is inserted into an existing draft, and the additional paragraph is not an alt to the already existing ones (see X.bis in the example below). The indicator thus allows the paragraph to be positioned correctly without disrupting the broader numbering structure.

Example:

X. *Decides* to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post, one Programme Management Officer (P-3) post and one General Service (Other level) post; [Proponent 1]

X.alt.1 *Decides* not to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post, one Programme Management Officer (P-3) post and one General Service (Other level) post; [Proponent 2]

X.alt.2 *Decides* not to establish one Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5) post; [Proponent 3]

X.bis *Requests* the Secretary-General to fill all vacant posts as a matter of priority; [New proposal, related to the thematic cluster of posts but not contradicting already existing language]

16. What is the difference between the phrases “decides to reduce resources for ... by 5 per cent” and “decides to further reduce resources for ... by 5 per cent”?

In budget resolutions, the following interpretations are used for costing purposes:

Language proposal	Costing Interpretation
<i>Decides</i> to reduce resources for by 5 per cent ...	Reductions will be made from the SG-level (and/or ACABQ if ACABQ agrees with SG)

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Language proposal	Costing Interpretation
<i>Decides to reduce resources for by 1.5 million</i> ...	
<i>Decides to further reduce resources for by 5 per cent...</i> <i>Decides to further reduce resources for by 1.5 million ...</i>	Reductions will be made from the ACABQ-level (where ACABQ has already proposed cuts)
<i>Takes note of paragraph xx of the report of the Advisory Committee</i>	Resource will be kept at the SG-level (where ACABQ has proposed cuts)
<i>Takes note of paragraph xx of the report of the Advisory Committee <u>and decides to ...</u>;</i>	Taking note of a recommendation of ACABQ means that resources would be kept at SG-level. If an adjustment to the SG amount is required a decision also needs to be added.
<i>Recalls paragraph xx of the report of the Advisory Committee <u>and decides / decides to further...</u>;</i>	Recalling of a recommendation of ACABQ means that resources would be kept at ACABQ-level. If an adjustment to the ACABQ amount is required a decision also needs to be added (use further if adjustment is in addition to the ACABQ-level)

More details and tips on how to draft language can be found in the [Guidelines for submitting language for draft resolutions](#) available on Fifth Committee Place on e-deleGATE.

17. What terms does the Fifth Committee use when taking action on reports?

The terms used by the Assembly when taking action on reports depends on the type of report considered. A detailed overview of terms used can be found in the [Working practices of the Fifth Committee when taking action on reports](#) available on the Fifth Committee website.

18. What is the meaning of the phrase “The Committee takes its decisions by consensus”?

The General Assembly, in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, “[c]onsider[ed] it desirable that the Fifth Committee, before submitting its recommendations on the outline of the programme budget to the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and the rules of procedure of the Assembly, **should continue to make all possible efforts with a view to establishing the broadest possible agreement**”.

The General Assembly has often used the phrase “**broadest possible agreement**” in its resolutions (resolutions 32/152 of 19 December 1977, 47/213 of 23 December 1992, 49/143 of 23 December 1994, 49/217 of 23 December 1994, 51/220 of 18 December 1996, 53/206 of 18 December 1998, 55/233 of 23 December 2000, 57/280 of 20 December 2002, 59/278 of 23 December 2004, 59/291 of 15 April 2005, 61/254 of 22 December 2006, 63/266 of 24 December 2008, 64/184 of 21 December 2009, 65/262 of 24 December 2010, 67/248 of 24 December 2012, 69/264 of 29 December 2014, 71/274 of 23 December 2016) but has not set out any definition of it.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



It is the established practice of the Fifth Committee, whenever possible, to take decisions, other than on elections, only after having made every effort to reach the broadest possible agreement before resorting to a vote. The General Assembly has not defined a specific number of delegations that would constitute the “broadest possible agreement” nor has it defined how many delegations would have to oppose to a proposal or parts thereof so that it could no longer be considered as having achieved the “broadest possible agreement”. The notion is therefore qualitative rather than numerical, and the practice relies heavily on the judgment of the Chair, the coordinator, and the collective experience and working methods of the Committee.

The work of the Main Committees is guided by the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the practice of the Main Committee concerned, including its working methods. In the case of the Fifth Committee, many of its working methods have evolved over time and remain informal. Some information can be found in the “Historical and analytical note on the practices and working methods of the Main Committees” ([A/58/CRP.5](#)).

If the Committee cannot initially agree on a paragraph or the draft resolution as a whole, it is customary, time permitting, to keep negotiating until agreement is reached. As negotiations take place in informal or informal consultations, no records are maintained documenting the initial positions of delegations, their evolving views, or specific objections raised during the course of the negotiations.

Where it becomes apparent that it is not possible to arrive at a consensus outcome, a coordinator (or facilitator) may consult with the Chair and Bureau representatives on how to proceed, while also seeking procedural guidance from the Fifth Committee Secretariat. In practice, they have several options, depending on the time remaining, the urgency of concluding the item and the complexity of the remaining issues. A coordinator may propose, for instance, to revert to a skeletal resolution or the skeletal resolution plus already adopted paragraphs (“skeleton plus”).

Ultimately, the decision on what text to formally present to Fifth Committee as draft resolution lies with the coordinator and the Chair of the Committee on whose behalf the informal consultations are coordinated. It is in their hands to determine whether all efforts have been taken to reach consensus. When, in their judgment, further negotiations would not result in consensus, the coordinator may submit a draft resolution enjoying the broadest possible agreement to the Committee. Once a draft is formally submitted and during its consideration in a formal meeting, Member States retain the right to propose amendments and to request that those amendments or the entire draft resolution be put to a vote.

As far as the adoption of a proposal by consensus is concerned, there is no established definition of the term “consensus”. However, in United Nations practice, “consensus is generally understood to mean adoption of a decision without formal objections and vote”. It is possible for delegations to disassociate, make reservations or declarations to a decision adopted by consensus.

19. What is the meaning of adopting a paragraph “ad ref”?

In the Fifth Committee, as in many other intergovernmental bodies, draft resolutions and decisions are the subject of informal consultations rather than direct discussion or negotiation in plenary meetings.

In these information consultations, the established practice is for the Fifth Committee Secretariat and relevant substantive offices to be present to respond to questions from delegations and to supply additional information as may be necessary to understand the implications of the proposed text. Once the first and second readings of Rev.1 conclude, the Committee normally moves into “informal informal”

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



consultations to negotiate. At that point, the substantive Secretariat is normally excused, and interpretation is no longer provided, although the Fifth Committee Secretariat may attend at the coordinator's request to offer procedural advice and record changes to the text.

If, in the context of informal informals, language is agreed upon, it is normally reflected as "adopted ad ref" (ad referendum). While there is no formal definition of the phrase "ad referendum", in Fifth Committee practice, it is normally understood to indicate that an agreement is provisional, and, time permitting, will be adopted in informal consultations, in the presence of the secretariat and benefitting from interpretation.

20. What is the difference between a "chair's text", a "coordinator's text" and a "negotiators' text"?

In situations where negotiators find it difficult to arrive at a consensus text, a coordinator may choose to propose a **coordinator's text** (or facilitator's text) with a view to bridging the differences based on the coordinator's individual understanding of existing proposals and positions. In some cases, a coordinator's text may continue to be negotiated and additional changes made. An example of such a coordinator's text is the draft resolution on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 2025 session, adopted in section XV of resolution 80/243.

A **chair's text** is a compromise proposal by the Chair of the Committee that is similar to the coordinator's text described above, but it is not normally negotiated after it has been proposed. An example is the draft resolution on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its fifty-eighth, fifty-ninth and sixtieth regular sessions and its thirty-seventh special session, adopted in section XVI of resolution 80/243.

More and more, the Committee, after the first and second reading of Rev.1, decides to negotiate "offline" and starts negotiating by exchanging proposals, frequently using consolidated tables noting the positions of delegations. As consensus emerges, they "clean up" the table keeping only consensus language that is then prepared as "**negotiators' text**".

21. What is the difference between 'deferral' and 'no action'?

In instances where the Committee has run out of time to arrive at a consensus outcome on an item, it may, *inter alia*, decide to choose either to **defer consideration** of the related report(s) to a subsequent part of a session or to **take no action** on the related report(s) before it.

As the Committee takes its decision by consensus, the decision to defer or to take no action is also taken by consensus. In other words, the Committee has no "default fallback option" in the absence of consensus. The decisions are normally taken in the course of the Committee's informal or informal-informal consultations and/or is the outcome of consultations of the coordinator with delegations on the way forward. Once a decision has been agreed (oftentimes through silence procedure following consultations), the coordinator will inform the Chair of the Committee.

Deferral

The **decision to defer** is a formal action taken by the Committee through the adoption of a draft decision entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration" under the agenda item entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations". The decision will also

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



specify when the Committee will resume its consideration of the reports concerned. Importantly, without a deferral decision, no further consideration of the report and the proposals contained therein can be undertaken by the Committee at a later session (including resumed part of the session).

If reports are deferred, the Committee effectively 'carries with it' the deferred report(s) from one session to the next, i.e., the same report(s) will again be on the agenda of the session the reports have been deferred to. As they have already been introduced in the original session, they are not introduced again; the Committee normally continues their consideration in the context of informal or informal-informal consultations.

Implications for future sessions

- *Stand-alone reports:* when a deferred report is **stand-alone**, meaning there is no ongoing or recurring mandate for the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly, the Committee will consider **the same report** the next time.
- *Reports with a recurring mandate:* When a deferred report falls under an existing recurring mandate for the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly (typically with an established reporting periodicity), the Committee will consider both the deferred report(s) and the subsequent report(s) submitted in accordance with that recurring mandate.

No action

A **decision to take no action** is characterized by the absence of any formal decision, acknowledgement, or documentation. It is, quite literally, a decision not to act. Once this decision is taken, the report(s) in question are removed from the Committee's agenda and will not be taken up again in the future.

Beginning with the **79th session**, the Committee's reports explicitly identify which items were not acted upon.

Implications for future sessions

- *Stand-alone reports:* When the Committee decides to take no action on a stand-alone report, the Committee's consideration of the report concludes. The report will not reappear on the agenda unless the Secretary-General is either requested to present a new report on the same matter or he independently elects to do so at a later time.
- *Reports with a recurring mandate:* Where a recurring reporting mandate exists, the Committee will resume its consideration of the subject matter at the next relevant session, in accordance with the mandated periodicity. In such cases, the Committee will examine the next report(s) submitted under that mandate, and its review of the issue continues uninterrupted within the established reporting cycle.

22. What is the difference between resolutions and decisions?

Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly are formal expressions of the opinion or will of the General Assembly. They have the same legal status.

Resolutions may, inter alia, reflect the views of the Member States, provide policy recommendations, assign mandates, or decide on matters regarding the UN budget. They generally, but not invariably, consist of two

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



clearly defined parts: a preamble and an operative part. The preamble generally recites the considerations on the basis of which action is taken, an opinion expressed, or a directive given. The operative part states the opinion of the Assembly, or the action taken.

Decisions are another type of formal action taken by the Assembly. They often deal with procedural, non-substantive or routine matters, such as elections, appointments, the time and place of meetings or the taking note of reports.

It is the prerogative of the Assembly to decide whether to adopt a resolution or decision.

23. Where can I find copies of presentations provided by Secretariat officials as well as official statements made during formal meetings?

Statements or presentations are available online on either the Fifth Committee website and the Journal, or the Fifth Committee Place on e-deleGATE, depending on whether they are made during a formal meeting or an informal meeting.

Formal meetings

Typically, any formal statement or presentation made during a **formal Fifth Committee meeting** will be made available to the general public as formal meetings themselves are public (including through live webcast) and proceedings are detailed in the summary records, press releases, etc.

Statements submitted to the Secretariat are posted on the [Fifth Committee website](#) and in the UN Journal following their delivery.

Alternative public sources are the [UN Journal](#), the Dag Hammarskjöld Digital Library ([Member States on the Record](#)) or the [Fifth Committee Summary records](#) which provide a summarized version of statements held.

Informal meetings

Material that is shared with the Committee in **informal meetings** is normally not available to the general public as informal meetings are closed meetings. Accordingly, such material is available only to Fifth Committee delegations through the [Fifth Committee Place on e-deleGATE](#).

Access to e-deleGATE and the various modules is granted by the system administrators in the Permanent Missions through the access management module.

24. What is Fifth Committee Place and how can I obtain access?

The [Fifth Committee Place](#) is a secure, password-protected module in e-deleGATE portal for delegates of the Fifth Committee. It is a repository of documents pertinent to the work of the Committee, including advance copies of reports, supplementary information, draft resolutions and decisions under negotiation as well as information on the working practices of the Committee.

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



Access to e-deleGATE modules is granted by the Access Administrators in the permanent missions through the Access Management module. Technical queries may be addressed to missions-support@un.int. Access to Fifth Committee Place module also allows access to other modules frequently used in the Fifth Committee, including the e-Submit module and the e-Speakers module. Depending on individual user's roles, additional access may also be required to Candiweb, the e-Candidatures and Elections module and the e-list of participants module.

For more information on Fifth Committee Place please visit [this page](#).

25. I am listed on the official Fifth Committee membership document, but I am not receiving notifications. What do I need to do to receive notifications?

Registration on the [e-List of Participants](#) module is solely for inclusion in the official membership document of the Committee (published at the main session and first and second resumed sessions). To receive email notifications from Fifth Committee modules on e-deleGATE as well as emails from coordinators, please see the table below in response to Question 26.

26. How can I receive notifications from Fifth Committee place or fifthcommittee@un.org? How do I receive emails from coordinators? How do I unsubscribe?

Use the table below to identify each notification type and take the required action.

Access to Fifth Committee Place automatically activates Announcements and End-of-Day Notifications. To receive Immediate Upload Notifications—and to make your details available to coordinators—subscribe to the "All" folder on the Subscriptions page.

Notification	What you receive	Who receives it	Start receiving	Stop receiving
Announcements from fifthcommittee@un.org	General announcements about the work of the Fifth Committee.	All users with access to Fifth Committee Place.	Request access from your Mission's Access Administrator. Access activates these notifications automatically.	Ask your Mission's Access Administrator to remove your access. You cannot turn off Announcements and End-of-Day Notifications separately.
End-of-Day Notifications from fifthcommittee@un.org	A daily summary sent only on days when new documents are uploaded.	All users with access to Fifth Committee Place.	Request access from your Mission's Access Administrator. Access activates	Ask your Mission's Access Administrator to remove your access. You cannot turn off Announcements and

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly

FAQ on the Fifth Committee and its working practices



			these notifications automatically.	End-of-Day Notifications separately.
Immediate Upload Notifications from fifthcommittee@un.org	An email each time a document is uploaded to a folder.	Users subscribed to the "All" folder.	Open the Subscriptions page, - select All- and click Subscribe.	Open the Subscriptions page and click X in the Unsubscribe column.
Emails from Coordinators	Messages about specific agenda items and negotiations.	Subscribers whom coordinators add to their distribution lists.	Subscribe to the "All" folder on the Subscriptions page (same as above on immediate upload notifications). The Secretariat provides subscriber lists to coordinators during the first week of the session and updates them as needed.	Unsubscribe from immediate notifications (see above on immediate upload notifications). If unsubscribing during the session, please also contact the relevant coordinator listed in the Coordinators Contact Information Sheet and request removal from the distribution list.

For more information on Fifth Committee Place please visit [this page](#).