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**RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF
THE OIC INDEPENDENT PERMANENT HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION
(IPHRC)**

**Rules of Procedure of the
Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the
Organization of Islamic Cooperation
(IPHRC)**

Rule 1 – Definitions

- 1 – The present Rules shall be titled: “Rules of Procedure of the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the OIC” and shall aim at setting procedures for holding sessions of the Commission and for the exercise of its functions.
- 2 - The present Rules shall also be applicable to any working group or other mechanisms that may be set up by the Commission.
- 3 - In the present Rules, the following terms and expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them hereunder:

OIC:	The Organization of Islamic Cooperation
Summit	The Islamic Summit of Kings and Heads of State and Government
Council:	The Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC
Charter:	The Charter of the OIC
Secretary General:	The Secretary General of the OIC
General Secretariat	The General Secretariat of the OIC
Commission:	The Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the OIC
Secretariat:	The Secretariat of the Commission
Director:	The Administrative Director of the Commission
Chairperson	The elected Chairperson of the Commission
Bureau:	The Bureau of the Commission composed of the Chairperson and two Vice-chairpersons one of whom serves as Rapporteur
Meeting(s)	A meeting of the Commission (as a whole or part of the membership) including regular, extra-ordinary and emergency sessions or any of the mechanisms that may be established.
Commissioner(s):	The elected member(s) of the Commission
Statute:	The Statute of the Commission
Member States:	The Member States of the OIC.

PART ONE: ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMISSION

SECTION I: NATURE AND OBJECTIVES

Rule 2 – Nature and objectives

1. Commission shall be the principal organ of the OIC in the domain of human rights and shall exercise its functions in supporting Member States in the promotion and protection of human rights for all in an independent manner in accordance with the provisions of Charter, Statute and Council Resolution No. 2/38-LEG.
2. Commission shall advance human rights and fundamental freedoms in Member States as well as the fundamental rights of Muslim minorities and communities in non- member States in conformity with the universally recognized human rights norms and standards and with the added value of Islamic principles of justice and equality.

SECTION II: MEMBERSHIP

Rule 3 – Composition

1. Commission shall consist of eighteen (18) Commissioners elected by the Council in accordance with Chapter II of Statute.
2. Two experts of the same nationality cannot be elected simultaneously as Commissioners.
3. Member States shall ensure that the candidates with the highest degree of independence, impartiality, integrity and expertise are elected.

Rule 4 – Term of office

1. Commissioners shall be elected for a term of three (3) years and may be re-elected only once.
2. The term of office shall commence on the date of the first regular session following the end of term of the outgoing Commissioners.
3. In the event that new Commissioners have not been elected to replace those completing their term of office, the existing Commissioners shall continue to serve until new Commissioners are elected.

Rule 5 – Termination of office

1. In the event of a unanimous agreement among all other Commissioners that a Commissioner is no longer apt to fulfill his/her functions for health or any other valid reason, Chairperson shall declare the post vacant and inform the Secretary General who shall take necessary administrative action.
2. If a Commissioner is absent for three consecutive regular sessions without justifiable reason, the Commission shall declare the post vacant and inform the Secretary General who shall take necessary administrative action.
3. In the event of death or resignation of a Commissioner, Chairperson shall inform Commission and the Secretary General who shall take necessary administrative action.
4. When a post is declared vacant, the Member State of which the deceased or retiring Commissioner is national shall nominate another expert for the remaining period of his/her term of office, in accordance with Chapter II of Statute and the present rules of procedure.

Rule 6 – Independent status of Commissioners

1. Commissioners shall act in their personal capacity and shall express their own convictions and views.
2. In exercising their function, commissioners shall at all times uphold utmost professionalism, truthfulness, independence, impartiality and integrity whilst enhancing their moral authority and credibility, free from any kind of extraneous influence.
3. Commissioners shall not receive instructions from any state, including their own, or any other third party.

Rule 7 – Solemn declaration

1. Before assuming their duties, newly elected Commissioner(s) shall make the following declaration:
“I solemnly declare that I shall faithfully discharge my duties with professionalism, truthfulness, independence, impartiality and integrity, free from any kind of extraneous influence, so help me God.”
2. Chairperson shall conduct the ceremony.

SECTION III: BUREAU**Rule 8 – Election**

1. Commission shall elect Bureau from amongst Commissioners.

2. Bureau shall consist of three Commissioners, each from one of the three constituent geographical groups. Election of the officers shall take place by seat, starting with Chairperson and followed by the Vice-Chairpersons one of whom shall act as a rapporteur.
3. In the absence of consensus, elections shall be held by secret ballot. Commissioner(s) obtaining a two-third (2/3) majority of those present and voting shall be elected. If, in the second (2nd) round, no candidate obtains the required majority, a third (3rd) round shall be organized between the two candidates who obtained the highest number of votes, and the Commissioner who obtains simple majority shall be elected. In the event of equal votes, the most senior Commissioner in terms of age shall be elected.
4. Members of Bureau shall be elected for a term of office of three years. Offices of Bureau shall rotate on a yearly basis among its members.

Rule 9 – Renunciation by a member of Bureau

If a Commissioner declares his inability to continue in his/her duties as member of Bureau, Commission shall elect from the same geographical group another Commissioner for the remaining period of his/her term of office.

Rule 10 – Functions of Bureau

1. Bureau shall be directly responsible to Commission and shall deal with procedural, organizational and representational matters, including in relation with Council.
2. Chairperson, in consultation with Bureau as appropriate, shall carry out the functions that may be assigned to him/her by Commission as well as those assigned by the present rules of procedure; including:
 - a- presiding over the sessions of Commission;
 - b- acting as the spokesperson of Commission;
 - c- supervising Secretariat; and
 - d- performing functions, as may be required on behalf of the Commission, during the inter- sessional period.
3. In the absence of Chairperson, he/she shall be replaced by a Vice-Chairperson.

SECTION IV: SECRETARIAT

Rule 11 – Structure

Commission shall be assisted by a Secretariat headed by a Director appointed in accordance with Statute. Secretariat shall provide Commission with such staff members, material means and services as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions.

Rule 12 – Functions

1. In addition to the functions specified elsewhere in the present rules of procedure, Secretariat shall prepare all necessary documentation, including draft agendas, programs of work and reports of Commission's sessions.
2. Secretariat shall receive and transmit to Commission any correspondence or communication addressed to it. Secretariat may also request of any interested party information or documents, it considers relevant, for consideration by Commission.

Rule 13 – Functions of Director

1. Director shall direct, plan and coordinate the tasks of Secretariat and coordinate the operational, technical and budgetary aspects of all functions related to Commission.
2. Director shall assist Commission and its members in carrying out their functions and duties.
3. Director shall be responsible for making all appropriate arrangements for the smooth running of Meetings.
4. Director, or his/her representative, shall attend Meetings without participating in deliberations or in the vote. Director may, however, be invited by Chairperson as appropriate, to make written or oral statements at Meetings pertaining to the work of Commission.
5. Director shall implement any other task entrusted to him/her by Commission or Chairperson.

SECTION V: SESSIONS

Rule 14 – Duration of sessions

In order to carry out its functions, Commission shall hold two (2) regular sessions a year, each for a duration of five (5) to ten (10) days. Extraordinary and emergency sessions may be convened for a duration not exceeding five (5) days.

Rule 15 – Venue of sessions

Commission shall convene bi-annually at its Secretariat, in regular sessions. It may also hold sessions, at another venue, at the request of any Member State or of the Secretary General with the approval of the Member States' simple majority.

Rule 16 – Date of sessions

1. Secretariat, in consultation with Bureau, shall endeavour to ensure predictability with regard to the dates for holding the two annual sessions of Commission to enable it to set the dates for the following session at the end of each session.
2. Director shall inform Commissioners of the date and venue of Meetings. A formal notification shall be sent, in case of a regular or an extraordinary session, at least forty (40) days before the session. In case of an emergency session, the notification should be sent at least five (5) days before the session.

Rule 17 – Extraordinary sessions

1. The request to hold an extraordinary session of Commission emanates from the Secretary General or a Member State and requires the approval of Member States' simple majority according to Article 18 of Statute.
2. General Secretariat shall circulate the request to Member States who shall respond at the earliest, pursuant to Article 18 of Statute. An absence of response shall be deemed as consent.
3. Commission shall accordingly meet at an appropriate date to be agreed between the Secretary General and the host State.

Rule 18 – Emergency Sessions

An emergency session of Commission may be convened by Chairperson, in consultation with Bureau, to address situations calling for immediate attention by Commission.

Rule 19 – Quorum

Two-thirds (2/3) of Commissioners provided there are at least (3) from each region, shall constitute the quorum for regular, extra-ordinary and emergency sessions of Commission.

Rule 20 –Public and private meetings

1. Meetings shall, in principle, be public unless Commission decides otherwise.
2. At the beginning of public Meetings, Commission shall announce the conclusions and decisions adopted during preceding private Meetings, if any.

SECTION VI: PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Rule 21 – Provisional agenda of regular sessions

1. Director shall draw up the provisional agenda of each session in consultation and with the consent of Chairperson, in accordance with the provisions of Statute and the present rules of procedure.
2. The provisional agenda may include items proposed, *inter alia*, by a Member State, an inter-governmental organization or NGO enjoying consultative status and national human rights institution of a Member State.
3. Proposals under paragraph 2 shall be communicated to Director at least sixty (60) days before the start of the session. Observations of Director shall be taken into account while including proposals made pursuant to this Rule in the draft agenda.
4. Items proposed under paragraph 2 should be accompanied by all related documentation and with an explanatory note, and should reach Secretariat at least forty five (45) days before the session of Commission.

Rule 22 – Provisional agenda of extra- ordinary and emergency sessions

The provisional agenda of the extraordinary and emergency sessions may only include the items for which the session is convened.

Rule 23 – Transmission and distribution

1. The provisional agenda and its related documents shall be transmitted by Director to Commissioners at least thirty (30) days prior to regular and extraordinary sessions.
2. Director may, in consultation with Chairperson and at least fifteen (15) days prior to regular and extraordinary sessions, distribute all the documents related to the items on the agenda of the session to General Secretariat, subsidiary organs, affiliated and specialized institutions, Member States, national human rights commissions, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations enjoying the OIC consultative status and Muslim communities and minorities throughout the world.

Rule 24 – Adoption of the agenda

1. Commission shall adopt its agenda at the beginning of Meetings.
2. At the end of each session, items to be included on the provisional agenda of the following session may be proposed. In the absence of consensus, the adoption of the proposed item shall require simple majority of Commissioners present and voting.

SECTION VII: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 25 – Duties and powers of Chairperson

In addition to other powers conferred upon him/her by the present rules of procedure, and in conformity with these rules, Chairperson, in conducting Commission's proceedings, shall have the following duties and powers:

- a- To declare open and close the Meetings;
- b- To direct the proceedings with a view to ensuring the efficient conduct of business. Chairperson may grant and withdraw the floor; limit the time accorded to each speaker; redirect the course of discussion in case of deviation from the matter under discussion; and, subject to Rule 26, close the list of speakers;
- c- To call for vote on any matter under discussion and announce the outcome of such vote;
- d- To rule on points of order
- e- To declare the adjournment and the closure of debates as well as the adjournment and suspension of meetings.

Rule 26 – List of speakers and limit of time

1. Chairperson shall grant the use of the floor to the speakers in the order in which it has been requested.
2. Chairperson may limit the time accorded to speakers and the number of their interventions.
3. Chairperson may, during a debate, read out the list of speakers and with the approval of Commission, declare the list closed. Where there are no more speakers, Chairperson shall declare the debate on the matter under discussion closed.

Rule 27 – Points of order

1. During the debate a Commissioner may, at any time, raise a point of order on which Chairperson shall decide immediately. If a Commissioner objects, the decision shall immediately be put to the vote to be maintained or overruled by a simple majority.
2. When raising a point of order, a Commissioner shall not debate the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 28 – Motion for the adjournment or closure of debates

A Commissioner may, at any time, move for the adjournment or closure of the debate. In the absence of a consensus, the motion shall be put to vote.

Rule 29 – Motion for the suspension or adjournment of meetings

During the discussion of any matter, a Commissioner may move for the suspension or adjournment of the meeting. In the absence of a consensus, the motion shall be put to vote.

Rule 30 – Motion on competence

Any motion tabled on the competence of Commission shall immediately be put to vote.

Rule 31 – Reconsideration of proposals

When a proposal is adopted or rejected, it shall not be reconsidered at the same session except by a unanimous decision.

SECTION VIII: ELECTIONS, VOTING AND DECISION MAKING

Rule 32 – Right to vote

The right to vote shall only be exercised by Commissioners. Each Commissioner shall have a single vote. In the event of a tie vote, Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

Rule 33 – Request for vote

A proposal or a motion submitted to Commission shall be put to vote if so requested by more than one Commissioner.

Rule 34 – Required majority

1. Commission adopts its recommendations and decisions by consensus. In the absence of consensus, the decision may be adopted by a two-third (2/3) majority of Commissioners present and voting on substantive matters, and a simple majority on matters of procedure.
2. In any case, a minimum of ten (10) affirmative votes shall be required for decision on non procedural matters.

Rule 35 – Method of voting

1. Commission shall vote by show of hands. At the request of any Commissioner it can resort to roll-call vote, in which case the vote of each Commissioner shall be recorded in the minutes. Each Commissioner would be entitled to a brief explanation of his/her vote.
2. Commission may decide to hold a secret ballot.

Rule 36 – Elections

In the case of multiple candidatures, elections shall be held by secret ballot.

Rule 37 – Decision making during inter-sessional periods

Commission may take decisions, as appropriate, during the inter-sessional period through electronic communication.

SECTION IX: MINUTES AND REPORTS

Rule 38 – Session report

1. Secretariat shall record and preserve the proceedings of Commission Meetings.
2. Secretariat shall prepare a draft session report and circulate it to Commissioners who shall have a fifteen (15) day deadline to introduce any factual rectifications. The final decision in this regard shall rest with Bureau.

Rule 39 – Reporting

Commission may periodically submit to the Council reports which may include, *inter alia*, the following:

- a) The status of implementation of its mandate and tasks assigned by the Council.
- b) Information and recommendations, as applicable, on the Member States' status of ratification and implementation of OIC covenants and declarations and International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law treaties.
- c) Activities in support of Member States' efforts in terms of policies aimed at enhancing legislation and policies in favour of the advancement and consolidation of human rights
- d) Activities in support of OIC position on human rights at the international level and consolidating cooperation among Member States in the field of human rights.
- e) The progress of provision of technical cooperation in the field of human rights and awareness-raising about human rights in Member States.
- f) Activities in support of the role of Member State-accredited national institutions and civil society organizations active in the field of human rights.
- g) Coordination of efforts and information exchange with Member States' working groups on human rights issues in international fora.
- h) A mandated thematic analysis of the status of promotion and protection of human rights in Member States to be conducted, *inter alia*, on the basis of:

- i. observations and conclusions based on studies and research carried out by Commission or following visits to Member States upon request;
 - ii. reports submitted by Member States to the UN human rights treaty bodies;
 - iii. reports presented to other regional mechanisms of which Member State(s) are equally members;
 - iv. reports of Member State-accredited national human rights institutions and civil society organizations active in the area of human rights.
- i) Visits and contacts undertaken during the reporting period.
 - j) Recommendations submitted to Council as stipulated in Rule 40.
 - k) Other activities that may be undertaken during the reporting period.

Rule 40 – Recommendations to the Council

1. Commission shall include in its reports to Council recommendations on measures necessary for the promotion of respect for human rights in Member States with a view to facilitating the implementation of the tasks of Commission conferred by the Summit or the Council and drawing their attention to any issue of relevance or urgency.
2. Recommendations submitted to the Council must draw on good practices in the field of human rights.
3. Recommendations may be on any matter pertaining to its mandates and objectives.
4. Recommendations should, as appropriate, be accompanied by description of means of implementation, as well as the relevant technical assistance that could benefit Member States in implementing the said recommendations.

SECTION X: WORKING GROUPS AND CONSULTANTS

Rule 41 – Setting up of working groups

Commission may, as necessary, set up working groups and other relevant internal mechanisms to facilitate the performance of its functions.

Rule 42 – Consultants

Commission may, as appropriate, recruit the services of consultants to avail of specific studies or provide relevant material and documentation in areas related to its mandate.

Rule 43 – Roster of experts

Secretariat shall keep a list of renowned individuals to benefit from their experience and expertise in the different fields relevant to Commission's functions.

SECTION XI: PARTICIPATION IN COMMISSION'S PROCEEDINGS

Rule 44 – Participation in Commission's proceedings

1. Representatives of Member States and OIC Observers may participate in public Meetings, as observers, and may make proposals without voting rights.
2. After approval of the host country, Commission may invite OIC subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated institutions, relevant OIC accredited governmental and non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and national human rights institutions, to participate in its sessions as guests.

Rule 45 – Participation of other individuals and organizations

Commission may invite an individual, organization or other relevant entities whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, objectives and principles of Charter to facilitate exchange of views on any specific issue under consideration.

Rule 46 – Consultation

Commission may consult an individual, organization or other relevant entities whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, objectives and principles of Charter on issues pertaining to human rights within its mandates.

SECTION XII: LANGUAGES

Rule 47 – Languages

1. The official languages of Commission shall be Arabic, English and French.
2. All documents of Commission as well as all speeches delivered in any of the working languages shall be translated and interpreted into the other two.
3. Any person submitting a document or making an address at Commission in a language other than the official languages must provide their translation/interpretation in one of the official working languages.

SECTION XIII: ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Rule 48 – Preparation of the budget

Secretariat, in consultation with Commission, shall prepare the draft budget of Commission concurrently with the schedule of the budget preparation of General Secretariat.

Rule 49 – Budget submission

Secretariat shall submit the draft budget of Commission to the OIC Permanent Finance Committee at least sixty (60) days before the date of its meeting for consideration, opinion and recommendation to the Council for its approval.

Rule 50 – Estimates

During Meetings, any proposal by a Commissioner entailing financial implication shall prompt Secretariat to prepare the budget estimate related to the said proposal and submit it, as soon as possible, to Commission. Chairperson shall draw the attention of Commission to those implications before it takes action on the proposal.

Rule 51 – Voluntary funding

1. Commission may periodically re-assess its financial requirements, and reallocate funds based on changing priorities with notification to Secretariat. Commission may also accept voluntary contributions from Member States or from external sources provided donations are accepted only from appropriate donors whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, objectives and principles of Charter and without prejudice to the independence of Commission's work and activities.
2. Commission's report to Council on financial matters shall detail sources and expenditure with regard to voluntary contributions.

Rule 52 – Financial responsibility

1. The budget of Commission is used to cover all expenses related to Commission's normal operations and activities, including expenses entailed for its Secretariat staff.
2. The overall expenses of Commission's regular annual sessions shall be borne by the host Member State.

Rule 53 – Allowances

Commissioners travelling on official missions for Commission, including participation in Meetings shall be granted a travel allowance equivalent to 140% of the rates paid to

Assistant Secretaries-General in accordance with the OIC Financial and Personnel Regulations.

Rule 54 – Administrative and financial rules

Without prejudice to the provisions of Rule 53, the relevant provisions of the OIC Financial and Personnel Regulations shall govern Commission.

PART TWO: FUNCTIONS OF COMMISSION

SECTION XIV: PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Rule 55 – Promotional activities

1. Commission shall pursue activities and devise programs in cooperation with Member States geared towards promotion and protection of human rights.
2. Commission may organize workshops, trainings or seminars on priority human rights issues, in conformity with its mandate and objectives. Commission may also provide publications for posting on its website. It may also undertake awareness campaigns in favor of the objectives outlined in chapter III of Statute.

SECTION XV: PREPARATION OF STUDIES

Rule 56 – Preparation of studies

1. Commission shall prepare studies and research on priority human rights issues, including those referred to it by the Council.
2. Studies and research initiated by Commission may, *inter alia*, include studies on international human rights norms and standards aiming at promoting inter-civilizational dialogue and understanding.
3. Studies may also aim at promoting the implementation of international norms and standards in relation to the rights of Muslim minorities and communities.
4. Commission may prepare research, studies, texts elaborating definitions, explanations, etc. on certain Islamic notions and values, with a view to assisting the OIC representation at international *fora*

SECTION XVI: TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Rule 57 – Technical cooperation and capacity building

Commission may extend technical assistance for capacity building in Member States. Such projects may be conducted in cooperation with OIC subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated institutions, international agencies, Member States' governmental organizations and accredited National Human Rights Institutions and civil society organization active in the area of human rights.

Rule 58 – Roster of excellence, research and training centers

In order to facilitate Commission's task in the field of technical cooperation and capacity building, Secretariat shall establish, besides the list of experts provided for under Rule 43, a list of centers of excellence, research and training, active in the field of human rights.

Rule 59 – Updates on main human rights initiatives

Secretariat may assist Commission in keeping it informed of the principal initiatives undertaken and results achieved in the field of promotion and protection of human rights by Member State-accredited National Human Rights Institutions and civil society organizations active in the area of human rights. The same information shall also be made available to Member States.

SECTION XVII: SUPPORTING OIC POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL FORA

Rule 60 – Comments on Human Rights Agenda in international fora

1. Commission may provide comments on items included on the OIC agenda and the agenda of the relevant UN bodies and other international fora on issues of interest to Member States.
2. Commission may also prepare analyses and formulations as contribution to the content of draft resolutions sponsored by the OIC Groups.

Rule 61 – Designating focal points and special representatives

Commission may designate focal points and special representatives to address specific issues on the OIC agenda and/or the UN human rights agenda.

SECTION XVIII: GOOD PRACTICES

Rule 62 – Compendium of good practices

1. Commission shall establish a compendium of good practices in the political and juridical fields aimed at the promotion of the rights of women, children and people with special needs as well as in matters relating to all forms of discrimination and violence.
2. Secretariat may periodically solicit information on legislation, institutions and policies of Member States in the above-mentioned fields, so as to constantly update the compendium of best practices.

SECTION XIX: COOPERATION WITH OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

Rule 63 – Cooperation with international and regional human rights mechanisms

1. Commission may maintain regular interaction with competent bodies within the UN system as well as with regional human rights mechanisms within its mandates.
2. Commission may take necessary measures to follow and participate in discussions and meetings on key human rights issues at the international and regional levels.

SECTION XX: NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSIONS

Rule 64 – Needs assessment missions

Commission may, with the consent of the concerned State, undertake needs assessment missions for matters under consideration.

SECTION XXI: ELECTION OBSERVANCE

Rule 65 – Election observance

Commission may, with the consent of the concerned State, participate in election observance missions in Member States and express its opinion and recommendations thereon.

PART THREE: TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

SECTION XXII: TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 66 – Rotation of terms

1. At the end of Commissioners' first term of office, nine (9) Commissioners, three from each of the constituent geographical groups, shall exceptionally be re-elected for eighteen (18) months in order to ensure the continuity of Commission's work and expertise, without prejudice to the provisions of Rule 4 of the present rules of procedure.
2. The Council shall designate nine (9) Commissioners to be re-elected through a drawing of lots.

Rule 67 – Computation of dates

All periods set forth in the present rules of procedure in number of days shall be understood to be counted as calendar days.

Rule 68 – Implementation

In the absence of specific provisions in the present rules of procedure, Commission shall take decisions on the basis of consensus or by two thirds (2/3) majority.

Rule 69 – Amendments

The present rules of procedure may be amended by consensus or by two thirds (2/3) majority. Amendments shall enter into force from the date of their adoption.

Rule 70 – Entry into force

The present rules of procedure shall enter into force from the date of endorsement by the Council.
