

**UNITED NATIONS**  
**DOCUMENTATION OVERVIEW**  
DOCUMENTS MANAGEMENT SECTION

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# WHAT IS A UN DOCUMENT?

*"A document is a text submitted for examination to a principal or subsidiary organ of the United Nations, it usually focuses on one or more issues on the agenda of the organ concerned." (ST/AI/189/Add.3/Rev.2)*

# WHAT IS A UN PUBLICATION?

*“The term United Nations publication refers to any written material which is issued by or for the United Nations to the general public, normally under the authorization of the Publications Board.”*  
(ST/AI/189/Add.3/Rev.2)

# MASTHEAD DOCUMENTS AND OFFICIAL RECORDS

## Masthead Documents

- Any kind of **symbolled** documents;
- Related to the agenda of the body that will consider it

## Official Records

- Primary documents submitted to or issued by principal UN organs;
- All official records are masthead documents

## Supplements to the official records

- Reports of subsidiary bodies;
- Compilation volumes of resolutions and decisions

## More Information:

- <http://research.un.org/en/docs/or>

# WHAT IS A DOCUMENT SYMBOL?

Combination of numbers and letters

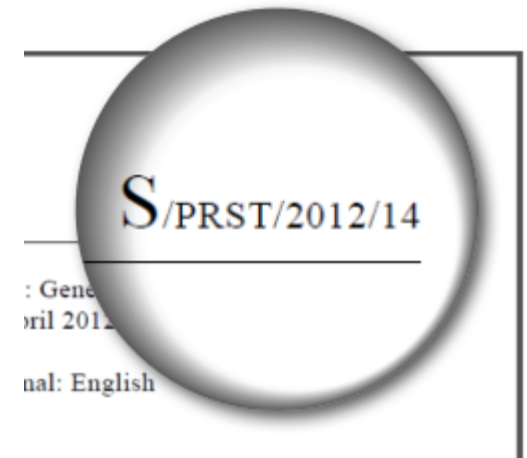
Unique identifier for a UN document

- 1 symbol for all languages

Indicates the organ to which the document is submitted

## More information

<http://research.un.org/en/docs/symbols>



# DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: FIRST COMPONENT

Indicates the principal organ the document is being submitted to or the organ that is issuing the document.

- A/- General Assembly
- S/- Security Council
- E/- Economic and Social Council
- ST/- Secretariat

Some bodies have a special series symbol that does not reflect the parent organ

- CRC/C/- : Committee on the Rights of the Child
- DP/- : United Nations Development Programme
- TD/- : United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- UNEP/- : United Nations Environment Programme

# DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: SECOND COMPONENT

## Second component

Secondary and tertiary components indicate subsidiary bodies:

- -/AC. .../- Ad hoc committee
- -/C. .../- Standing, permanent, or main committee
- -/CN. .../- Commission
- -/CONF. .../- Conference
- -/Sub. .../- Subcommission
- -/WG. .../- Working group
- Etc.

## Examples

- A/C.1/-  
General Assembly/First Committee
- E/CN.9-  
ECOSOC/Commission on Population and Development



# DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: SPECIAL COMPONENT

**Special components reflect the nature of the document:**

- -/L. ... Limited distribution (generally draft documents)
- -/PRST/- Statements by the President (Security Council, Human Rights Council)
- -/PV. ... Verbatim records of meetings
- -/RES/- Resolutions
- -/SR. ... Summary records of meetings
- etc.

**Examples:**

**A/C.1/60/PV.1-**

- A/ - General Assembly
- /C.1/ - First Committee
- /60/ - 60th session
- /PV. - Summary Record
- .1 - First meeting

# DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: FINAL COMPONENT

The final component, appearing as a suffix to a symbol, reflects modifications to the original text:

- -/Add.
  - Addendum
- -/Amend.
  - Alteration, by decision of a competent authority, of a portion of an adopted formal text
- -/Corr.
  - Corrigendum (may not apply to all language versions)
- -/Rev.
  - Revision (replacing texts previously issued)

# MAIN TYPES OF DOCUMENTS

## Main types of UN Documents:

- Resolutions and Decisions
- Meeting records
- Letters
- Reports
- Presidential Statements

Detailed description of the different document types  
available in the UN Documentation Research Guide

- <http://research.un.org/en/docs>

# RESOLUTIONS

Formal expressions of the opinion or will of United Nations organs

## Individual documents

- General Assembly
  - A/RES/session/...
- Security Council
  - S/RES/...(year)
- Economic and Social Council (2012-)
  - E/RES/year/...
- Human Rights Council
  - A/HRC/RES/session/...

# DECISIONS

Used to designate formal actions, other than resolutions, dealing with non-substantive or routine matters such as:

- Elections
- Appointments
- Time and place of meetings
- Taking note of reports

**Normally not issued as separate documents**

# RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS: COMPILATIONS

The compilation volumes of resolutions and decisions of the principal organs (GA, SC, ECOSOC)

- Text of resolutions and related information (sponsors, votes)
- Text of decisions

Resolutions adopted by subsidiary bodies are usually published in the sessional report of the body

More information

<http://research.un.org/en/docs/resolutions>

# MEETING RECORDS

## Meeting records contain

- Statements and speeches
- Actions taken

## There are two types of meeting records:

- Verbatim records (“proces verbaux”)
  - Contains full, first-person account of the proceedings of a meeting:
    - .../PV.-
      - S/PV.5862
      - A/64/PV.101
- Summary records
  - Contains a third-person condensed version of the proceedings of a meeting:
    - .../SR.-
      - A/C.5/62/SR.25
      - E/2010/SR.22

# SESSIONAL REPORTS

- Subsidiary bodies submit reports to their parent organ;
- These reports are usually Supplements to the Official Records of the parent organ;

## The reports contain:

- Resolutions and decisions adopted by the subsidiary body;
- Summary of the discussions held;
- May include draft resolutions that the subsidiary body recommends the parent organ to adopt.



# REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

The Secretary-General submits reports to the principal organs on topics mandated by resolutions

- There are many reports of the Secretary-General on many topics:
  - Peacekeeping operations;
  - Political situations;
  - Technical subjects;
  - Legal topics, etc.
- No distinguishing symbol element for reports of the Secretary-General.

# LETTERS

## Letters may come from:

- Member States;
- Secretary-General;
- Presiding officers of UN organs and subsidiaries.

## Letters may be addressed to:

- Secretary-General;
- Presiding officers of UN organs and subsidiaries.

## Letters may transmit reports, statements or outcome documents

- of a subsidiary body;
- of a regional group meeting;
- of another international organization.

# HOW TO FIND UN DOCUMENTS


## Basic Tools and Tutorials

- <http://www.un.org/en/documents/>

### QUICK LINKS


- UN Charter
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Millennium Development Goals
- UN Journal [PDF]
- e-Subscription: Sign up for electronic documents
- UN Treaty Collection
- Research Guide
- Maps and Geographic Information
- Conferences, Meetings and Events
- Documents in German

### SEARCH

- Official Document System (ODS)  [Link to ODS](#)
- UN Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet)
- UN-I-QUE: UN Info Quest
- UN Multilingual Terminology Database (UNTERM)

Search by symbol (e.g. A/63/100)

Document symbol

Research Guide: Document Symbols 

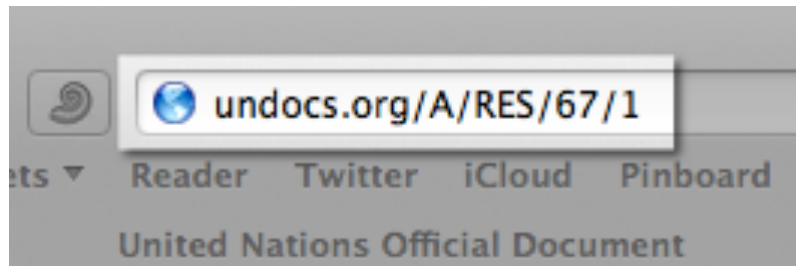
Enhanced Search

[Enhanced ODS search page](#)

[Type known symbol in box](#)

# FINDING UN DOCUMENTS BY SYMBOL

Add the symbol after <http://undocs.org/>.



Double check in the Official Document System: <http://documents.un.org/>

# OFFICIAL DOCUMENT SYSTEM (ODS)

## 1993 onwards

- All UN Documents

## 1946 onwards

- Resolutions;
- Security Council plenary documents;
- Meeting records of plenary meetings of the General Assembly;
- Supplements to the General Assembly Official Records.

**Older documents are being scanned and made available on an ad-hoc basis**

# SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS: GENERAL INFO

- The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) receives all official documents to be processed for United Nations (UN) meetings through the Documents Management Section (DMS) of the Central Planning and Coordination Division (CPCD). All documents regardless of type - slotted or non-slotted, are now submitted via gDOC directly to DMS.

# SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS: GUIDELINES

- ❑ The DGACM Submission Guidelines can be downloaded directly from iSeek or by contacting the DMS front desk at [dms@un.org](mailto:dms@un.org).

- ❑ iSeek link:

[https://iseeknewyork.un.org/system/files/dgacm\\_sub\\_guide\\_final\\_5.0final\\_external.pdf](https://iseeknewyork.un.org/system/files/dgacm_sub_guide_final_5.0final_external.pdf)

- ❑ For additional assistance, DMS is staffed from 08h00 – 18h00 Monday through Friday and can be reached at 1-(212)-963-6579

# SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS: THINGS TO REMEMBER

## Slotted Documents

- If possible, should be based on the previous official version on ODS
- Must have a forecast number prior to submission
- Slotted documents must be submitted in the correct format – MS Word only.
- Embedded Excel tables should be converted to a Word table.
- All tables, images, charts, and graphs must also be submitted alongside the Word version in an editable format
- Font should be Times New Roman size 10, and single-spaced.
- Submissions not adhering to the guidelines will be rejected and returned to the submitter!
- Funds and programs should include a Umoja account code for cost recovery



# SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS: THINGS TO REMEMBER (CONTINUED)

## Fair copy documents

- Fair copy submissions should also be submitted in Word format
- Non-mandated fair copy documents should be submitted with a Umoja account code for cost recovery

## Submission and processing of documents or material considered confidential or classified

- All requests for processing of documents or material considered confidential or classified must first be submitted in writing directly to the Chief of the Documents Management Section.
- Please refer to the Submission Guidelines for more information

# SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS: THINGS TO REMEMBER (CONTINUED)

## Draft Resolutions

- All draft resolutions must be based on the previous A/RES version on ODS.
- All changes must be clearly marked
- The minimum time allowed for draft resolutions to be produced is 48 hours. This excludes weekends and holidays. The 48-hour timetable will begin once the document has been received by DMS and does not include the day of submission.
- Any request for a schedule less than 48 hours must be discussed and cleared with the Chief of DMS.
- All requests for Revisions, Reissuance, or Corrigendums should also be cleared by the Chief of DMS.

# SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS: THINGS TO REMEMBER (CONTINUED)

## Communications

- In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly (A/520/Rev.17) as referred to in sub-section II relating to the Work of the Main Committee (paragraph 30) of Decision 34/401 on the rationalization of the procedures and organization of the General Assembly, it is quoted, ***“Member States should refrain, to the extent possible, from requesting the circulation of any individual communication as documents of the General Assembly and in lieu thereof, where circulation of such documents is desired, should, as far as possible, request such circulation under the cover of a note verbale in the official languages in which they submit them.”***
- After taking the above into consideration, delegations requesting issuance of communications as documents of the General Assembly should refer to the DGACM Submission Guide for additional information.
- Electronic versions in Microsoft Word should be sent to [gaab@un.org](mailto:gaab@un.org), or to [dms@un.org](mailto:dms@un.org), to facilitate the processing of communications.
- All requests for Revisions, Reissuance, or Corrigendums should also be cleared by the Chief of DMS.

# SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS: THINGS TO REMEMBER (CONTINUED)

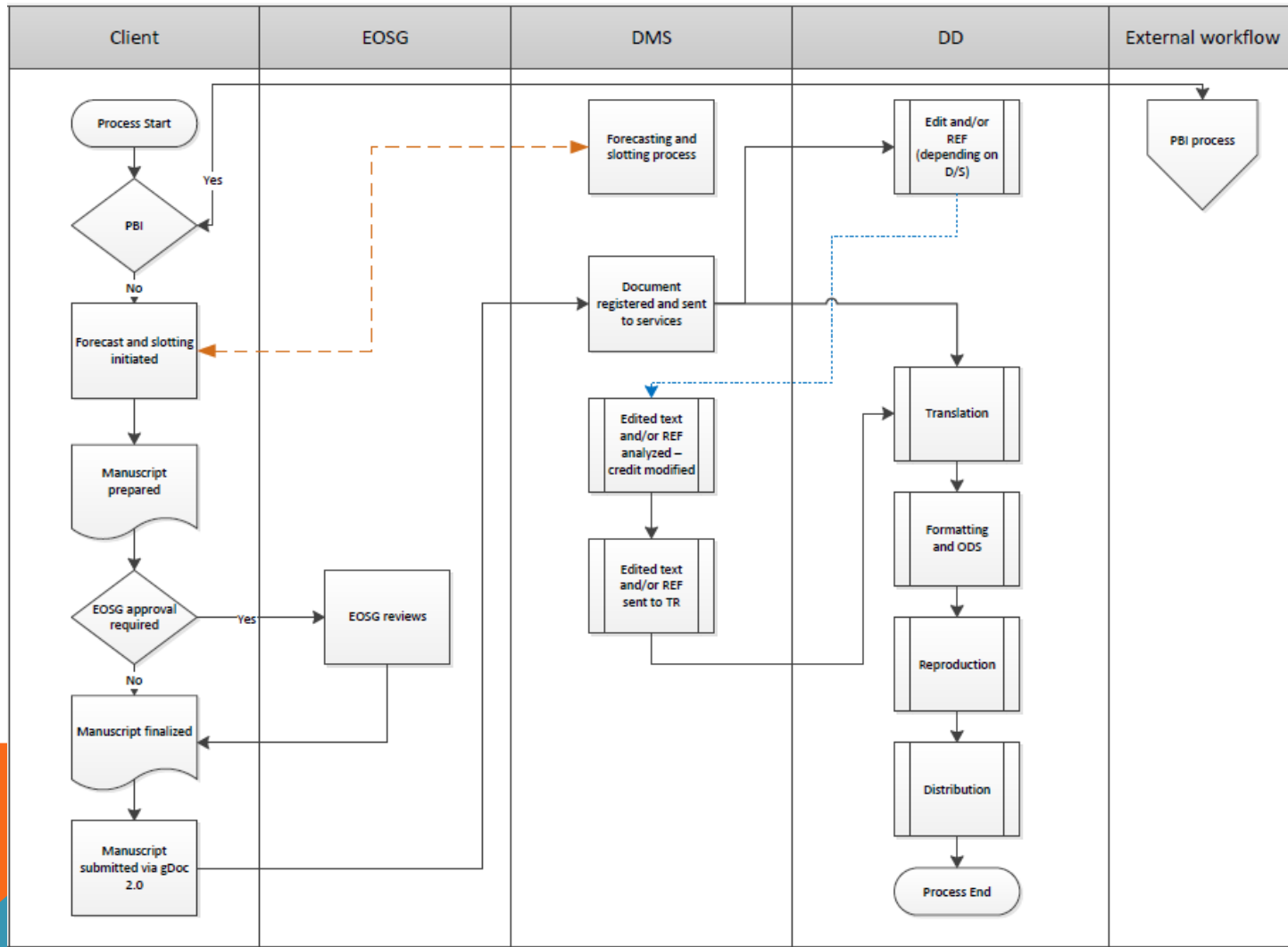
## NGO Statements

- ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 states: *“Written statements relevant to the work of the Council may be submitted by organizations in general consultative status and special consultative status on subjects in which these organizations have a special competence. Such statements shall be circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the members of the Council...”*
- Word limits for general consultative status: 2,000 words
- Word limits for those in special consultative status: 500 words
- Only one written statement is allowed for each organization
- For more information, refer to <http://csonet.org>

# WHERE CAN I GET MY TRANSLATED DOCUMENTS?

- For documents issued daily, please refer to the United Nations Journal: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/journal.asp>
- Documents-on-demand services are provided through the Documents Assistance Centre (CB-0264) and at the Documents Counter (S-1B-032)
- Requests for hard copies of documents may be made via email at [publishing@un.org](mailto:publishing@un.org) with the following specific instructions: document symbol, languages required, quantity of each document, and the physical delivery address.
- Additionally, documents may be retrieved through the Official Document System (<http://documents.un.org>), or the PaperSmart portal (<http://papermart.un-meetings.org>).
- eSubscription and RSS feeds – a simple and fast alternate way to access UN parliamentary documents electronically can be found at <http://undocs.org/>

# WORKFLOWS: PARLIAMENTARY (PARALLEL)



# WORKFLOWS: PUBLICATION

