

**AD HOC CONSULTATION ON
RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE
NATIONAL ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLY**

March 16, 1995

PRESENT: His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, The Very Rev. Fr. Krikor Maksoudian, Judge Vincent Gurahian, and Simon Balian

PURPOSE: To suggest procedural rules to the Supreme Spiritual Council (Council) to be presented to the Assembly for adoption.

CREDENTIALS

COMMITTEE: The Council to appoint a five member Credentials Committee and one of the five to chair the committee. Members should be appointed from different geographic regions, one each from: Armenia, CIS, Europe, Americas, and Middle and Far East.

REGISTRATION

OF DELEGATES: Delegates should register with the Credentials Committee which shall issue badges to the delegates.

PRESIDENT: The Locum-Tenens shall preside over the Assembly until the new Catholicos is elected. The new Catholicos presides to adjourn the Assembly. The President shall call the Assembly to

order.

INTERIM

OFFICERS:

Until the election of the officers, the Chairman and Secretary of the Council shall act as the officers in their respective capacities.

DELEGATES:

Delegates are: All Archbishops and Bishops of the Armenian Church who are affiliated with the Episcopal brotherhood of the Mother See, lay members of the Council, delegates appointed by hierarchal sees, and delegates elected by each Diocese.

QUORUM:

To convene the Assembly the presence of 50% plus one of the delegates shall constitute quorum.

DECISIONS:

All decisions shall be by majority vote of delegates present and voting (including the addition of names from the floor to the ballot) except in the case of an absence of quorum while the Assembly is in session. In the latter instance, decisions shall require a two-thirds majority.

VOTING:

All voting shall be done by the delegates who are present. Each delegate is entitled to only one vote. There should be no voting by proxy. Voting for elections shall be secret ballot. Voting on resolutions and other matters may be by voice or show of hands.

OFFICERS:

The Council shall present a slate of two names for each position of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary. Floor nominations shall require a majority vote to be added to the ballot. There shall be no discussion in the process.

BALLOTS: Names shall be printed in three alphabets: Armenian, Latin, and Russian. Credentials Committee shall distribute ballots to delegates who shall be called to sign the register then cast their vote.

The ballot shall clearly indicate how many people should be voted for. All ballots not conforming to the instructions shall be invalid.

VOTE

VERIFICATION: The Credentials Committee shall count the votes under the jurisdiction of the Council and give the results to the presiding officer who shall pass them on to the Interim Chairman for announcement.

Following the election of the officers, the President shall invite the elected Assembly officers to take their positions.

AGENDA: The Council shall prepare the Agenda and present it to the Assembly for adoption.

PARLIAMENTARIANS: The Chairman shall appoint three parliamentarians to advise him on rules.

HARMONY

COMMITTEE: The Chairman shall appoint a committee to maintain harmony and decorum on the floor.

COURTESIES

COMMITTEE: The President shall appoint a Courtesies Committee.

RULES:

The basic rules of parliamentary procedure shall be observed
Accordingly:

- (a) Delegates shall speak only when recognized by the Chairman;
- (b) Speakers shall address the chair only and not engage in argument or discussions with fellow delegates;
- (c) Proper decorum and language shall be maintained;
- (d) The Chairman can limit debate on issues after reasonable discussion.

**ELECTION OF
CATHOLICOS:**

- (a) The Council shall prepare a ballot consisting of all the Archbishops and Bishops of the Episcopal brotherhood of the Mother See who have not informed the Council that their names not appear on the ballot.
- (b) The first voting shall be to form the official three-person ballot. Delegates shall vote for one person only and the three who receive the highest number of votes shall constitute the official ballot.
- (c) The second voting shall be to elect the Catholicos from the three person ballot. Delegates shall vote for one name only.

- (d) The candidate receiving the majority of the votes cast shall be elected Catholicos.
- (e) If no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, then a second ballot shall be prepared by dropping the candidate who received the least number of votes.

CANDIDATES:

The Council shall ask the three candidates to submit an autobiography not to exceed two pages. The final version agreed to by the candidate and the Council shall be printed and distributed to all the delegates as an official document prior to the voting for Catholicos. The biography shall be in Armenian, English and Russian.

ADJOURNMENT:

The elected Catholicos shall preside over the Assembly to adjourn.

**CONSTITUTIONAL
ASSEMBLY:**

The Episcopal Council should present a resolution to the Assembly mandating that the new Catholicos appoint a Constitutional Committee within 90 days to draft a constitution, circulate the constitution for comments and convene an Assembly within two years for the specific purpose of considering the draft constitution.

Notes prepared by
Simon Y. Balian

**AD HOC CONSULTATION ON
NATIONAL ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLY**

January 25, 1995

Present: His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Fr. Haigazoun Najarian, Fr. Krikor Maksoudian, Judge Vincent Gurahian, Edward Chapien and Simon Balian.

The Primate welcomed the group and stated that the purpose of the meeting was to recommend procedural rules to the Locum Tenens and the Supreme Spiritual Council ("Council") for the upcoming National Ecclesiastical Assembly ("Assembly").

Following discussion there was a consensus to recommend the following rules:

President: The Locum Tenens should preside, however if there is a strong desire the Catholicos of Cilicia and the Patriarch of Istanbul can co-preside with the Locum-Tenens.

Officers: The Assembly should elect one Chairman, one or more Vice Chairmen and Secretaries.

The Council should prepare a slate of candidates with additional nominations from the floor. Floor nominees must receive a certain amount of votes to get on the ballot.

Rules: The Assembly should adopt rules of procedure as an initial item on the agenda.

Voting: All voting should be based on majority of votes cast in person. No proxy voting. Presiding officers vote as well.

Agenda: The Council should prepare the Agenda. Items can be added from the floor by majority vote.

Election of Catholicos:

The Council will prepare the list which will include all the Bishops. Bishops who do not wish to be candidates shall write a letter to the Locum Tenens requesting that their names not appear on the list of eligible candidates.

The Council will distribute the modified list to all the delegates.

Delegates will be asked to vote for one person on the list. The top three vote-getters will make-up the second ballot. If no one gets a majority of the votes cast on the second ballot, then the third ballot will be made of the two candidates having received the highest votes.

All voting will be by roll call and by secret ballot.

As an alternative: Delegates can vote for three/five persons who will become the official candidates.

Election Committee:

The Council should appoint a five member election committee to supervise, monitor and count voting. Diversity should be the guiding principle. For example, can appoint one each from the following regions: Armenia, CIS, Europe, Americas and Middle East.

Supreme Spiritual Council:

No consensus on whether to elect a new one or have the present Council continue with a limited specific mandate.

Next Assembly: Consensus that this Assembly's Agenda be limited to elections and that the Assembly should set a date 3/5 years from now to call an Assembly to discuss important Church matters.

Notes recorded by,
Simon Y. Balian