Introducing a system for a written procedure in the PSC’s working procedures

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Introduction

The PSC Steering Committee convenes twice a year. These meetings allow Steering Committee members to adopt motions and decisions affecting the work of the whole Goal Chair and its reporting to external bodies.

Nevertheless, there may be occasions where the gap between Steering Committee meetings is too long to deal with more pressing matters such that the PSC may miss opportunities for positive action or leave the impression of being too measured in its approach.

For this reason, we are advocating the introduction of a written procedure for adopting decisions where recourse to a scheduled meeting would not be practical. In each case, the full committee would be consulted, and sufficient safeguards are built-in to the procedure to ensure that no decisions can be taken without consensus.

Modifications to the PSC Terms of Reference (ToR)

A written procedure is already mentioned in the existing PSC ToR in paragraph 6, “Any decisions made by the PSC Steering Committee, during meetings or through written procedure, will as far as possible be by consensus.”

There are however, no clearly defined mechanisms or implementing rules how this would be carried out in practice. For this reason, we propose the following insertion in the current ToR between paragraphs 5 & 6 in a new rubric entitled “Written Procedure”
i. Where the issue at hand is of sufficient urgency such that it cannot wait to the next Steering Committee meeting, the PSC Steering Committee members or the PSC Secretariat may decide to use a written procedure to adopt decisions.

ii. The written text of the proposed decision, along with any supporting materiel, shall be sent to all the members of the Steering Committee, stating the time allowed for communicating any objection or modification to the proposed decision. The time allowed for objection or comments may not be less than ten working days. If, by the time stated, no member of the Steering Committee has lodged a written objection or modification with the PSC Chair, the proposal shall be deemed to have been adopted.

iii. If an amendment is lodged, the modified text shall be resubmitted to all the members of the Steering Committee following the procedure in ii above.

iv. If an objection is lodged, the proposal that was the subject of the written procedure shall be entered on the agenda of a forthcoming PSC Steering Committee meeting.

v. At the end of the procedure, the documents adopted in this manner shall be recorded in the minutes of the next PSC Steering Committee meeting.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE PSC TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

We commend the new text to the Steering Committee as a way of increasing the flexibility and efficiency of our working arrangements without compromising on oversight arrangements.

We request the Steering Committee to adopt this insertion to its ToR.