

2019 CHARTER AMENDMENTS

PROPOSITION #16

To fully and fairly complete the implementation of One-Person-One-Vote within DPCA

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Suma Shamanna, Secretary DA-India (non-DPCA member)
Thinh Nguyen, Former Chair, DA-Vietnam (non-DPCA member)

The Problem

While the 1P1V amendment in Tokyo fixed the problem of multiple votes allocated to a single DPCA member, we still have the – significantly increased – problem of several DPCA members from smaller CCs only receiving one-half a vote each.

This amendment proposes to insert the following as Section §3.6.d (shift current Sections d, e, f, g, h, each down one letter)

3.6 (d) Each Country Committee Chair and Vice-Chair as a DPCA voting member shall be allocated one (1) whole vote.

Principle: Just, Fair, Full, and Equitable Voting

Every elected DPCA member from a CC in good standing deserves a full vote, providing them with equal and fair representation in our meetings and decision making. The voting weight of some should not be reduced to only half the value of their peers, as is currently the case.

Background

In May 2018, at the Tokyo DPCA Global Meeting, DA passed a major milestone in confirming and implementing the importance for our organization of the fundamental democratic principle of “One-Person-One-Vote” (1P1V) for our global voting allocations to country committees.

This was a major step forward in correcting one of the most significant flaws in the compromise Charter that was adopted back in Seoul in 2011.

While this fixed one heavy end of the scale, and removed the possibility of a single voter holding an inherent voting weight of 8-to-1 (8-times more votes) than some other DPCA

members – we did not, however, fix the imbalance on the other end of the scale – where some DPCA members are still only allocated 1/2 a vote.

Current Voting Allocations

The recent February 2019 DPCA voting allocations exposed to a greater extent a serious flaw that has long existed in our voting allocations formula – Six Country Committees who had 2 votes last year, have now been reduced down to just one vote for the entire committee: One-half vote allocated to each Chair and Vice-Chair.

- The DPCA Charter has always recognized both the Chair and the Vice-Chair of every Country Committee as a DPCA voting member entitled to inherently hold equal votes as part of their Country Committee voting delegation. (See Charter Section 2.2.(a) for definition of DPCA Membership.)
- When we admit a new Country Committee (regardless of their membership numbers) we immediately grant them a minimum of 2 votes to ensure that both the new Chair and Vice-Chair have a vote and a seat at the table.
- To maintain an active Country Committee requires a significant level of effort, time, cost, and engagement – regardless of membership numbers in the committee. The burden of running a small committee can even be more challenging, as there are fewer potential volunteers to draw on, and it can even be more difficult to find new members in the country.
- While the initial calculations as part of the 2011 Seoul compromise were designed to ensure that every CC did in-fact receive an allocation of at least inherent 2 votes, later modifications introduced in Punta Cana 2015 inadvertently produced the effect on effectively held votes to the current situation, where now a full 20% of our CCs only hold one whole vote. In other words, an elected Chair and Vice-Chair of an active, viable, and compliant CC, now only get one half vote each.

Urgency – Completing the Implementing of 1P1V Now in 2019

Now that we see the increasingly significant – and perverse – implications of our flawed voting calculations, we need to clearly demonstrate our commitment to fully applying the principle of One-Person-One-Vote within DPCA and adopt this amendment this year.

- If we do not correct this unjust and unfair imbalance in our voting allocations, then it is easily possible in subsequent years that this imbalance could continue to increase, where up to nearly 40% – or 20 CCs – could be reduced down to only 1 vote.
- The current situation is neither fair, just, or equitable, and sends a completely inappropriate message on the value of DPCA participation to the smaller, newer, and aspiring Country Committee Leaders who we should be encouraging to join

and contribute to DA.

- It is as if we say, “Your basic contribution here as a Chair and Vice Chair is only worth half as much as the rest of us.”

What Does Not Change

This proposed amendment does not change any other aspect of voting allocation, voting weights, or calculations in the Charter, other than ensuring that every country committee Chair and Vice Chair is given a whole vote each.

This proposed amendment does not change the number of voters who have the right to vote, or the number of members in the DPCA.

As with our *elected DNC Members, and our International Executive Committee Members*, who each have one whole vote, this amendment simply ensures that each Chair and Vice-Chair – as recognized DPCA members – are allocated a single vote so that they are equal to every other member of the DPCA.

This amendment simply ensures that all DPCA members have a single, fair, and whole vote, and that some (to quote George Orwell) are not inherently “... *more equal than others*.”