**The 2021 DACN Meeting & Parliamentary Procedure**

Many aspects of the Democrats Abroad Global Meeting will be run using Robert’s Rules of Order (RRO), combined with a few rules of order which we will vote to adopt at the beginning of the meeting. These rules help us discuss new ideas, and come to agreement on decisions for the organization.

What follows is an outline of the Rules of Order we will be proposing to the body at the beginning of the meeting, and asking for a ⅔ affirmative vote to accept.

It then includes a review of some of the fundamental principles of RRO, and a list of ways to use RRO during the discussion. Many thanks to Will Bakker for the original doc that many of these points are adapted from, and to Julian Becker for his further input.

 **Proposed Rules of Order for the Global Meeting**

* In order to put your hand up to speak, please add **\*\*handup** in the chat.
* The chat box shall be used to seek to be recognised but cannot be used for substantive debate when not called upon to speak (exceptions may be made if someone’s mic is not working and the member, when called upon, needs to type their comment into the chat).
* On each debatable item, each member will be entitled to speak up to two (2) times unless the chair makes an exception. The time limit on speeches is 90 seconds.
* A member who wishes to speak a second time on the same item must wait until those DPCA members who wish to speak on it for the first time have spoken.
* To ensure we cover as many proposed bylaws amendments and resolutions as possible, the time limit for debate on each main motion will be 20 minutes (exclusive of secondary motions), with a 10 minute limit for each debatable secondary motion.

**Fundamental principles of Robert’s Rules of Order**

1. Every member of the meeting has the right to speak once on an idea (if they wish) before anyone may speak a second time.
2. Every member of the meeting has the right to know what is going on at all times.
3. Only urgent matters allow members to interrupt someone who is speaking or break into a queue.
4. The group discusses one idea at a time and makes a decision about that idea before going to the next idea. Any exception to this is extraordinary and requires a motion and a vote. For example, if we approve an agenda and the end of an agenda period arrives in the middle of a motion, the motion may be suspended until a rescheduled time.
5. Any deviation from the rules is an extraordinary decision, made by the whole group, and requiring a ⅔ affirmative vote.

**Voting Notes**

Bylaws amendments require a ⅔ affirmative vote of those casting ballots to pass, and resolutions a simple majority affirmative vote of those casting ballots. Democrats Abroad rules also require that members from at least ⅓ of all in-compliant country committees agree in the affirmative to all decisions of the body before they are successfully agreed on or concluded.

**Types of votes used during the Global Meeting**

***Unanimous consent***- This form of voting is useful if there is likely to be no objection to a decision (such as approving meeting minutes). In this case, the Chair will say something like “At this time, if there is no objection, we will adopt the motion to…”. The chair will then wait for any objections, and if there are none say ““Hearing none, (the motion) is adopted.” Note that if one person objects to the motion, a different form of voting must then be used.

***Voice vote*** - Democrats Abroad runs voice votes online through chatbox feedback. The chair will call for a voice vote on a motion and ask the monitor to add the motion title to the chatbox. The chair will then ask first for aye votes, then nay votes, and then abstentions. Proxy holders will be asked to add both their own votes and their proxy votes to the chat (see example below). The Chair and voting team will then calculate and declare the results. If the vote is close, the chair will likely move to a Rollcall vote.

*We will ask proxy voters to include the vote, name of person they are voting on behalf of, and that person’s country. Example: “aye - Carol Danvers (Moldova)”*
***Rollcall vote***- A rollcall vote ensures that every voting member’s vote is recorded and tallied by our ballot team. We will run our rollcall votes through Zoom chatbox and a calculator that helps tabulate the votes. Expect each rollcall vote to take between 30 and 40 minutes to run (including voting time and tabulation time).

**How to add your voice to the meeting**

New ideas are brought to the meeting by a report, an agenda item, or as new business. Each of these events creates a new main motion that is then up for discussion. The motion is discussed and then voted on.

1. **You want to share your comments for or against a motion.**
	* During the discussion period for a motion, join the queue of speakers by adding **\*\*handup (pro)** or **\*\*handup (con**) to the chat box. After being recognized by the chair, state your position (“I am for/against the motion because…”) and then make your case in the time agreed by the body.
	* If you wish to speak a second time, you may re-join the queue and wait until all those waiting have spoken once.
2. **You want to change the wording of the motion under consideration**, or add or subtract from the motion without fundamentally changing the topic.
	* Join the queue to speak. After being recognized by the chair, say **“I move to amend the motion by”** and then state that you want to add words to the motion, strike words from the motion, or strike and replace words. If the motion is a resolution, you may move to amend the resolution itself – adding, striking, or replacing words.
	* Your motion to amend (if accepted by the chair) will be discussed. You should explain your reasons for making the change only after the motion is seconded and discussion begins. The amendment will be either accepted or rejected by a vote and then the discussion of whether to accept the main motion will continue.

	The conversation may look like this (note that voters must be recognized by the chair before they speak.)

	Voter 1: \*\*handup
	Chair: Yes, voter 1?
	Voter 1: I move to adopt green as our favorite color.
	Chair: Do I hear a second?
	Voter 2: Second

	Chair: Any discussion?
	Voter 3: \*\*handup
	Chair: Yes, voter 3?
	Voter 3: I move to amend the motion, and suggest that we specify the green as blue-green in the language of the motion.
	Chair: Do I hear a second for this amendment?
	Voter 4: Second

	Chair: We now have an amendment to our original motion, asking that we specify “blue-green” rather than “green” as our favorite color. Is there any discussion? ….  Hearing none, I will now call for a voice vote to amend the original motion language. *(Voting happens, the motion passes).*Chair: We will now return to the original, but now amended motion, and continue discussion on the motion to adopt blue-green as our favorite color.
3. **You are confused about the main motion or a procedure underway** **and need clarification.**
	* Review the chatbox, as the chatbox moderators will be helping everyone keep up with where we are in the agenda by noting motions under discussion, and motions ready for voting.

*The chat may look like this:*--------------------
Current Discussion on Res. 1 Title

*Or like this:*

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Voting on Res. 1 Title

* If the chatbox does not provide a signpost to where we are in the meeting, privately message the chatbox moderator to ask for orientation. The moderator will be identified with a **\*mod** in front of their name.
* If you need ***immediate*** clarification (if a vote is about to be called and it is not clear on what) - write **\*\*Point of Information** in the chatbox. The chair will recognize you by name, ask you to state your question, and will then attempt to clarify the situation.
1. **You have a question about the facts behind a motion or something claimed by another speaker**, or you wish to correct something said by another speaker.

Join the queue of speakers. After being recognized by the chair, state your question or correct the previous speaker. The chair will decide whether to allow a conversation or not. You may not initiate a conversation yourself.

Do *not* interrupt and say “Point of Information” because that is disruptive, and time-consuming. See the proper use of “Point of Information” in **section 3** above.

1. **You want to propose something reasonable during a meeting**? Consider reaching out privately to the parliamentarian via chat (look for **\*Parl Julian Becker** in the participants list) and asking how to do it using parliamentary procedure.

Some examples: stop talking about a motion temporarily and move it later in the day, depart from the agenda to discuss something specific, limit debate to a certain amount of time or number of speakers, reconsider a past decision, take a short break, or ask a smaller group to research and report back later the same day, extend the end time of the motion discussion, agenda item, or meeting.

You may also reach out by getting into the queue and asking the chair, but private outreach may be more speedy.
2. **You want to avoid coming to a decision on the motion during this meeting** and instead charge someone else to study it further.
	* Join the queue to speak. After being recognized by the chair, say **“I move to refer this motion to a committee”** and add details about which committee should study it and what the deadline for their report would be (as needed).
	* Your motion (if accepted by the chair) will be discussed. You should explain your reasons for making the change only after the motion is seconded and discussion begins. Others may move to change your motion (“move to amend”). If your motion passes by a majority vote, the idea will not ordinarily be discussed again at the meeting.
	* *Tip: if there is time, you might want to type up a draft of your committee referral motion, which the parliamentarian can help you with (see* ***Section 5*** *above).*
3. **You want to stop the debate.** (Also known as “call the question”)
	* Join the queue to speak. After being recognized by the chair, say **“I move to close the debate.”**

	Before doing so, *please recognize that a motion to close debate will require a 2/3 vote (or unanimous consent) and will likely take longer than listening to those who want to speak*. *We recommend using this tactic very sparingly, and instead letting the body discuss the motion until the time for debate runs out.*
	* Your motion must be seconded, and there will be no discussion of the idea of closing debate. The motion (if accepted by the chair) must pass with 2/3 of the group’s votes. *Again, please note that this will normally take longer than simply hearing out the remaining speakers.*

1. **You disagree with the chair’s announced results for a voice vote.** (Unusual)

Do not wait for recognition from the chair. Type **\*\*Rollcall vote** into the chatbox. This will require a roll-call vote that is time-consuming to review (time for voting, and then at least 20-30 minutes for tabulation) but will establish an exact count. The roll-call vote is final.

*Note, if the vote looks too close to call, the chair will likely move to a rollcall vote.*

**You believe the chair is breaking the rules of the meeting (for example, skipping someone in the queue inappropriately).**Type **\*\*Point of Order** in the chatbox. Wait for recognition by the chair, and then point out the urgent problem. *Use carefully and consider consulting the parliamentarian first (****\*Parl Anders Hove****).*

**Discussion and voting on proposed amendments to DACN Bylaws**

1. Proposed amendments were due 30 days before the AGM. We will not discuss proposed amendments beyond those on the docket today.
2. For each proposed amendment, the proposer may first present for a maximum of 90 seconds.
3. Comments will be entertained from the membership when recognized by the session chair.
4. In order to put your hand up to speak, please add \*\*handup in the chat.
5. The chat box shall be used to seek recognition to speak, but cannot be used for substantive debate.
6. The time limit on comments is 60 seconds. Members are entitled to speak up to two (2) times, unless the chair makes an exception. A member who wishes to speak a second time on the same item must wait until those members who wish to speak for the first time have spoken.
7. The time limit for debate on each proposed amendment will be 10 minutes.
8. The session chair will call for adoption of each proposed amendment by unanimous consent. If there is dissent, then the chair will call for a count of “ayes” and “nays” in the chat box.