



**United Nations Office at Nairobi
Division of Conference Services**

Documents Submission Guidelines



Introduction

1. The Division of Conference Services (DCS) of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) processes all official documents¹ for the United Nations meetings convened by UN bodies headquartered in Nairobi, as well as publications, correspondence and other ad hoc documents requiring editing, translation and/or formatting.
2. These guidelines are intended to assist submitters and author departments in preparing their documents and submitting them via the gDoc 2.0 platform. Additional information can be found in the UN Editorial Manual ([click here](#)) and the UN Editorial Directive ST/CS/SER.A/45 ([click here](#)).

The submission process

3. All documents must be submitted through the Documents Management System (gDoc 2.0) to the Documents Management Unit (DMU) of the Planning and Coordination Section (PCS). Submissions via email will not be accepted, except when a gDoc 2.0 account has not yet been created.
4. Submitters and authorizing officials must be registered in gDoc 2.0 in order to submit documents for processing. If you do not have a gDoc 2.0 user account, please refer to the annex to these guidelines. The annex provides links to step-by-step tutorials on how to use gDoc 2.0 to submit documents.

Basic requirements related to the format and structure of documents

5. All submissions should comply with the following requirements:
 - (a) All documents submitted for processing must be in Microsoft Word format. DCS cannot process documents in any other format, such as PDF, InDesign, etc.
 - (b) Reference documents may be submitted in other formats. They must be uploaded as “additional” files and be clearly labelled. For reference material previously processed and issued by DCS or available in ODS (<https://ods.un.org>), submitters are required to list only the documents' symbols in the instructions field in the gDoc 2.0 portal. No reference documents will be accepted by email.
 - (c) Documents may be submitted only in the six UN official languages.
 - (d) Parliamentary documents should be prepared using up-to-date templates, which can be requested from the UNON Template Focal Point.
 - (e) Tables, charts, graphs and other material requiring editing and/or translation must be fully editable in MS Word, Excel or PowerPoint. They should not be embedded as images, except when an image is used only as a background for information presented in editable MS Word text boxes. Any file containing text embedded as an uneditable image will be returned to the author for resubmission in editable format.
 - (f) All PowerPoint and Excel files used for creating tables, charts and graphs featuring in a document must be submitted as additional files in gDoc 2.0. Such additional files should be submitted as separate files and be clearly labelled. In the filename, authors must indicate the type of element (table, figure, visual), the chapter or section to which the file belongs, and its number in the series. For example, the file for table 1 in chapter 3 would be named Table 3.1, and the file for figure 1 of the same chapter would be named Figure 3.1; other images and visuals in the same section would be named Visual 3.1, Visual 3.2, etc.

¹ Official documents related to meetings include pre-session, in-session and post-session documents. Pre-session documents are prepared for consideration during a session (meeting), in response to a mandate from the relevant body, and are included on the agenda of the session. In-session documents are issued during the session (as “limited distribution” documents, with an “L” in the document symbol, or as “conference room papers”, or CRPs) for consideration and possible adoption or approval by the body meeting (e.g. draft resolutions/decisions). Post-session documents include adopted decisions, resolutions, and official records of the session.

- (g) Paragraphs, tables and figures must be numbered for ease of reference. Tables and figures should have titles which should form part of the body of the MS Word document and not part of the graphic element.
- (h) If a document contains photographs or other images subject to copyright, those images must be attributed (for more information, click [here](#)). The source and caption (if any) of each image should be outside the image, not embedded in it. If images contain text, it must be embedded as an editable text box and must be formatted in a font that makes it easily readable when printed in monochrome.
- (i) All documents based on previously issued versions **must** be prepared and submitted using the MS Word file of the earlier document in its final formatted and edited version. Such earlier versions can be obtained from the Official Documents System (<https://ods.un.org>) or the official documents repository of the submitting body. Each submission must be accompanied by a separate file in which all changes are clearly marked using the “track changes” feature in MS Word. It is not necessary to mark formatting changes. In other words, submitters should provide a clean copy of the document as the standard electronic MS Word submission AND a reference document showing all changes clearly tracked using the tracking feature in MS Word.
- (j) All content should be presented in a coherent structure. Authors should clearly identify the various parts of their document in a sequential order (i.e. Chapter I, Section 1, 2, 3, Chapter II, Section 1, 2, 3, etc.). The entire document should flow consistently from start to finish.
- (k) Colours other than the default text colour may be used for design purposes, but not to convey information (e.g. avoid using a blue line for data points from 2024 and a green line for data points from 2025), as such distinctions might not be accessible to people with visual disabilities that prevent them from distinguishing between colours.

6. Documents not conforming to these basic specifications will be returned to the submitters for correction and re-submission.² It is the responsibility of the submitting office to adhere to the above-mentioned specifications and to make all necessary changes to bring the submission into compliance. For additional specific information regarding UN editorial guidelines, please see the UN Editorial Manual ([click here](#)).
7. If your document does not meet the above-mentioned criteria for a justifiable reason, please contact DMU at <unon-dcs-docs@un.org> to discuss the details before submitting.

Departmental corrections, corrigenda and revisions

8. Documents submitted to DMU are assumed to have been reviewed by the consulting officials and approved as final and ready for editing. Requests for light changes or corrections after submission can be accepted if the documents are still being edited. Requests for changes and corrections will not be accepted once the edited text has been reviewed by the client³ and the translation process started, except in very exceptional cases to be approved by DMU.⁴ Otherwise, if a submitter still wishes to modify a document after having reviewed the editing, the initial submission should be cancelled and a new text, reflecting the desired changes, can be resubmitted as a new request under a new job number and with delayed submission and issuance dates.

² This might result in late submission and lead to issuance after the statutory issuance date.

³ To meet DGACM quality standards, documents should be edited before being translated. Although sharing edited text with consulting officials is not an official DGACM procedure/requirement, UNON DCS generally gives clients the opportunity for a courtesy review of edited text, which should be done within 48 hours. This review is the last stage at which we can accept minor textual changes from the consulting official. If changes are major, besides requiring a formal justification, the editorial service may request that the job in process be closed and the work already done accounted for. In this case, the Documents Management Unit will complete the editing service in gDoc 2.0, initiate any required financial charges, cancel the translation request, and ask the client to proceed with a new submission.

⁴ Changes and corrections requested by the client after its review of editing can be made if they involve formatting errors (in mastheads, running heads, corner notation, paragraph numbering, etc.) and can be handled by the text-processing units without involving editors or translators. Substantive changes after review should not be requested or accepted unless they are of critical importance – for example, country names, names of bureau members, dates or names of upcoming meetings, etc.

9. Submitters wishing to make changes to published documents should request a corrigendum (/Corr.1) or a revision (/Rev.1). A corrigendum – which carries the symbol of the published document followed by the suffix /Corr.1 – is issued as a separate document to correct a small number of errors that could hamper the use of the published document, such as incorrect amounts in a budget table. Though issued as a separate document, the corrigendum forms an integral part of the original document. A revision – a new document bearing the symbol of the published document followed by the suffix /Rev.1 – can be requested when additional information received after the issuance of the document makes it necessary to replace the document in its entirety. A revised document will be billed as a new submission (please contact DMU for a cost estimate). The published document can be withdrawn through a corrigendum, so that only the revised document is accessible to the public (for more details, click [here](#)).
10. Requests for corrigenda and revisions must be submitted to DMU through gDoc 2.0. Every request must be accompanied by the MS Word file of the latest officially issued version on ODS (<https://ods.un.org>), with all changes marked using the track changes feature in MS Word. If necessary, the latest version issued by DCS can be requested from DMU.
11. Technical reissuance can only be approved for substantive or formatting mistakes introduced by DCS staff during editing, translation or formatting. Requests for reissuing documents for technical reasons must be approved by the Chief of DMU. Such requests should be sent by email specifying the reason(s) for which a document should be reissued. Once received, such requests will be reviewed by DMU and the Translation and Editorial Section to determine whether reissuance is warranted and will be processed accordingly.

Forecasting and slotting of pre-session documents

12. The slotting system is a tool for forecasting and planning documentation for meetings and conferences. It represents a concrete attempt to respond to the repeated requests of Member States that documents be made available in good time for consideration by the bodies for which they are prepared, and to resolve the problem of late submission of documents. It aims to achieve the timely issuance of documents through workload forecasting and capacity planning. The slotting system impacts three key performance indicators: timely submission of documents, timely processing within DCS and, most importantly, timely issuance of official documents in all official languages.
13. All parliamentary documents must be forecasted prior to their submission via the gDoc 2.0 forecast module. Depending on a legislative body's rules of procedure, forecasting – planning for the submission and processing of documents – may begin as early as 24 weeks before the start of the meeting for which they are destined. DMU can provide clients with a submission and issuance timetable.
14. When a documentation forecast is submitted, all information pertinent to the forecasted documents must be accurate and complete, as the actual submission information in gDoc 2.0 will be automatically filled from the forecast. Upon acceptance of the forecast, the documents' status changes to "slotted".
15. Slotted documents must be submitted on or before the day agreed in the forecast. Otherwise, they will be considered late submissions, and their issuance date may be delayed. Documents submitted after 4.30 p.m. (Nairobi time) on a given day will be considered as having been received on the next business day.
16. Slotted documents submitted after the standard submission deadline must bear a footnote giving the reason(s) for late submission (see para. 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208), irrespective of the slot date.

Special requirements for forecasting and slotting extrabudgetary documents

17. Documents relating to meetings and conferences not listed in the UN official calendar are considered non-mandated and are processed as extrabudgetary documents. They are subject to the forecasting

and slotting regime described above, but they also require an approved cost estimate for the required services and a corresponding Umoja service order.

18. Please follow the steps below when submitting an extrabudgetary document for processing:
 - (a) Submit your document in gDoc 2.0.
 - (b) Select the XB option and enter a valid Umoja account code in the Finance tab (Fund Centre/Fund/Budget Period, or Internal Order Number, or WBSE). Please include the name of the certifying officer.
 - (c) The Conference Support Section (CSS) in DCS will create an Umoja service/sales order, using the funding code provided, to charge for the work requested. The client department's financial approver will receive an automated workflow email from Umoja indicating that the order is ready for approval. Once approved, the order will go back to CSS for checking of the cash availability against the funding provided in Umoja. Once CSS confirms the availability of cash, the document will be authorized by CSS in gDoc 2.0 so that work on it may begin.
19. An incomplete or incorrect funding code in Umoja will result in the rejection of the gDoc 2.0 submission, and the submitter will be notified by email. If cash confirmation in Umoja is lacking, CSS will notify the financial approver.
20. Where a quotation is required before submission, please email DMU <unon-dcs-docs@un.org> to request one.

Word count limits⁵ and the waiver system

21. The waiver system, managed by DMU, is a tool for handling documents whose length exceeds the word count limits (8,500 words for reports of the United Nations Secretariat and 10,700 words for reports of subsidiary organs and expert groups and other reports not originating in the Secretariat, as per General Assembly resolution 52/214).
22. The word count limits apply only to documents relating to meetings listed in the UN official calendar – that is, funded under the regular budget.⁶
23. In his memorandum of 25 April 2002 on “Page limits for reports originating in the Secretariat”, the Secretary-General requested heads of department to:

“...clear draft reports prepared under your authority and to sign justifiable requests for waivers for major policy documents. The requests, to be granted only in exceptional cases, should continue to be addressed to the Assistant Secretary-General, DGACM, who will seek the guidance of the Chef de Cabinet as may be required.”
24. In paragraph 16 of section B of its resolution 53/208, the General Assembly called upon the Secretariat to:

“...make its procedures for obtaining waivers to the 16-page rule more rigorous, while maintaining, however, the necessary degree of flexibility, with a view to encouraging author departments to reduce the length of their submissions while maintaining high standards of quality”.
25. During every preliminary forecasting exercise, DMU should be alerted to any documents that are likely to exceed the word count limits.
26. Waivers for documents exceeding the word count limits must be requested in advance, and relevant correspondence should be uploaded in gDoc 2.0 along with the submission.

⁵ The total word count includes footnotes, endnotes, headings, and any hidden text.

⁶ Extrabudgetary documents may exceed the established word limits. However, in that case, they will generally require additional processing time and should be slotted accordingly.

27. Author departments should keep in mind that the granting of waivers for excessively long reports is becoming increasingly rare.

Special rules for processing in-session documents

28. In-session documents must be forecasted accurately, and their schedule of submission and issuance must be carefully discussed in advance with UNON DCS to ensure sufficient capacity to process them.
29. The minimum time required for rush processing of draft decisions and draft resolutions is 24 hours. The 24-hour timeline will begin to run the day after the document (in its final version, edited and reviewed) has been received by DMU, unless otherwise agreed in advance. Acceptance of rush processing requests depends on advance planning, as processing capacity needs to be established beforehand and overtime work approved for staff who might have to cover extended hours to fulfil those requests. Since in-session plans are formalized at the preparatory stage and sufficient staffing is lined up to process the forecasted workload, the client will be billed for that staffing even if it was not fully used – hence the importance of proper planning and monitoring.

Submission and processing of confidential documents

30. All requests for processing confidential documents or other material must be submitted in writing directly to the Chief of the Documents Management Unit.
31. Such requests should provide information about the submission, including the word count, the service(s) requested (e.g. editing, translation, text-processing, formatting, printing) and the desired date of completion of the work requested. The Chief will review the request and contact the requester with further instructions.
32. *Important:* Under no circumstances should confidential material be transmitted to the generic email address <unon-dcs-docs@un.org> or uploaded to gDoc 2.0 until clearance and instructions are obtained from the Chief of the Documents Management Unit.

Annex

- Link to gDoc 2.0: <https://conferences.unite.un.org/gdoc2>
- For questions to the gDoc 2.0 technical team: gdoc-support@un.org
- For questions pertaining to documents submission: unon-dcs-docs@un.org
- For gDoc tutorials: <https://www.youtube.com/@gdoctutorials4699>