Guidelines on the Preparation and Submission of Documentation
INTRODUCTION

What is documentation?

“The term 'documentation' as used in the United Nations signifies a body or accumulation of written material issued for or under the authority of an organ of the United Nations, irrespective of the form in which it is issued or of the process by which it is reproduced.” United Nations Editorial Manual (1983), p. 4.

What is a document?

"The term “document” is used to designate written material officially issued under a United Nations document symbol . . . regardless of the form of reproduction." Ibid.

What is a publication?

"The term “publication” is applied to any material… which is issued under the authorization of the Publications Board." Ibid., p. 8. United Nations publications include Official Records, studies and reports, and recurrent items such as periodicals, technical journals and bulletins. (See ST/Al/189 and addenda).

The General Assembly, through its resolutions on control and limitation of documentation, has set down the main directives on document submission, management and processing. The guiding principle behind those resolutions has consistently been to ensure that intergovernmental bodies have at their disposal, well in advance of their meetings, the documents that they need to do their work.

In each section of the guidelines, the directives of the General Assembly will be given in detail. Briefly, those which apply to pre-session documentation –the largest category of documents produced– are the following:

Format

♦ The following elements are to be included in reports of expert groups and in reports prepared by the Secretariat
  • Summary of the report, including its legislative mandate
  • Consolidated conclusions, recommendations and other proposed actions, which should appear in bold print and which are to appear in the first chapter of the report
  • Relevant background information
Length of submissions

♦ 8,500 words maximum per document (16 physical pages) for reports originating in the Secretariat (reports of the Secretary-General; notes by the Secretary-General transmitting other reports; reports submitted by senior officials, and reports and notes of the Secretariat, including such organizational papers as annotated agendas, information for participants, and studies or research on specific questions carried out by the Secretariat at the request of an organ, sometimes with the assistance of consultants or a group of experts).

♦ 10,700 words maximum per document (20 physical pages) for all the documents that do not fall under the groups mentioned above.

♦ For those documents that go beyond the stated limits, a request for a waiver must be addressed to the Assistant Secretary-General, Department for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management, New York, with a copy sent to the Chief, Central Planning and Coordination Service, Conference Services Division, Geneva.

Deadlines for submission

♦ 12 weeks before the opening of the session for provisional agendas
♦ 10 weeks before the opening of the session for all other material to be translated
♦ 4 weeks before the opening of the session for material that does not require translation
♦ Documents submitted after the requested deadlines should carry a footnote on their cover page stating the reasons for their late submission. In the absence of such a footnote, it will be necessary to return the document in question to the author department for its insertion.
♦ For those reports whose submission will be delayed, a request for a waiver must be addressed to the Chief, Central Planning and Coordination Service.

Issuance and distribution

♦ The provisional agenda of the meeting is to be issued in all official languages 8 weeks before the opening of its session
♦ All other documents for the consideration of the body are to be issued 6 weeks before the opening of the session, in all official languages
♦ All language versions are to be issued simultaneously
♦ No document is to be posted on a Website until all language versions have been officially issued

The desire to ensure compliance with those directives is also one of the thoughts behind the preparation of the guidelines. Errors in document presentation or submission necessarily cause delays in processing, thereby causing delays in issuance. Delays in issuance result in late receipt of documents, which lessens the time that intergovernmental bodies have to consider them and, thus, devalues both the documents themselves and the efforts that have gone into their preparation and processing.

Work on documentation, at any stage of the process, occupies the time and energy of a large number of staff members in many different offices. A properly presented document moves easily through the documentation chain. That is the goal – a clearly understood, reasonably managed and smoothly functioning documentation process.
NOTE FOR DRAFTERS

Although the present guidelines have specific reference to the work of those staff members who prepare documentation forecasts and who submit documents for processing, certain elements are of direct interest to drafters of parliamentary documentation and publications. For ease of reference, they are enumerated below:

♦ Forms of parliamentary documentation – pre-session, in-session and post-session. 
  *See chap. III.*

♦ Elements to be included in the cover page of a parliamentary document. 
  *See chap. IV.* (The annex contains examples).
  • Masthead
  • Symbol
  • Original language of document
  • Corner notation – intergovernmental body, dates of session etc.

♦ Directives of the General Assembly on required elements. 
  *See chap. IV.*
  • Summary
  • Consolidated conclusions, recommendations and other proposed actions – set out in bold type
  • Relevant background information

♦ Deadlines for submission. 
  *See chap. V.*
  • 10 weeks before the opening of the session for all material that must be translated
  • 4 weeks before the opening of the session for material that does not require translation

♦ Length of documents submitted. 
  *See chap. V.*
  • 330 words per single-spaced page
  • 8,500 words for reports originating in the Secretariat
  • 10,700 words for other reports

♦ Requirements for reference material. 
  *See chap. V.*

♦ Preparation of publications. 
  *See chap. VI.*
Finally, there are **four principles of documents management**, primarily derived from directives of the General Assembly, which drafters must bear in mind:

- Maximum length of documents submitted
- Deadlines for submission
- FIFO, LILO – first in, first out; last in, last out
- Simultaneous distribution of all language versions

Only by strict adherence to those principles will the “downstream” functions of documents management and processing succeed in their work to the satisfaction of all.
The Documents Management Section is the focal point for all matters involving all steps in the processing of documentation, as well as being the repository of directives of intergovernmental bodies on the question. The responsibilities of the Section reach at the same time in two directions: back towards originating offices in regard to the preparation of their submissions and forward to those Secretariat offices that receive manuscripts for further work – reference, evaluation, translation, text-processing, reproduction and distribution.

What are the responsibilities of the Documents Management Section?

♦ To administer resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and any other body relating to the control and limitation of documentation
♦ To keep up to date on all directives on documentation preparation and management and to communicate all information to author departments
♦ To establish clear guidelines for documentation submission
♦ To advise secretariat offices on efficient documentation planning and preparation
♦ To receive and verify document forecasts and to prepare production statistics; to negotiate with author departments on their documentation requirements, which need to be balanced against workload availability in downstream sections
♦ To receive all manuscripts from originating departments, to ensure that they meet approved editorial and technical standards and to approve manuscripts for processing

ATTENTION

In these days of advanced information technology, submitting offices have the capacity to produce perfectly official looking documents for presentation to their intergovernmental bodies. On occasion, under the pressure of time, documents have been submitted to those bodies without first passing through the Documents Management Section, which presents as official a document that has no official status or existence. Even more serious is that intergovernmental bodies have on occasion taken action on the basis of such documents. The absolute first rule in document submission is that all manuscripts, if they are to become official documents, must pass through the Documents Management Section. Only in that way can submissions be recorded and tracked.
To register and transmit manuscripts to appropriate units for processing

To assign priorities to, arrange production schedules for, and monitor the processing of all documents and publications in order to ensure timely and simultaneous distribution

**What does the Section receive for processing?**

Priority throughout the documentation process is given to **parliamentary documentation**, that is, documents produced at the request of and for the use of intergovernmental bodies. That category *(see chap. III)* includes the following types of documents:

**Pre-session**
- Officially mandated documents to be considered by intergovernmental bodies
- Agendas, annotations thereto and other organizational papers
- Reports on the status of documentation for the session
- Reprints of pre-existing document (also called re-rolls)
- Revisions of existing documents, corrigenda, etc.

**In-session**
- Draft resolutions and decisions on which the intergovernmental body is to take action
- Draft report of the intergovernmental body
- Conference room, working and information papers
- List of participants (upon request)

**Post-session**
- Final report of the organ concerned
- Summary records or verbatim records

**Non-symbol documents**

The Section also receives and processes all mandated **publications** *(see chap. VII)*, information notes for the Secretariat and administrative instructions, as well as miscellaneous inter-sessional documents.

**What does the Section refuse for processing?**

- Incoming or outgoing letters, memoranda, faxes and e-mails addressed to or coming from submitting offices of the secretariat
- Newspaper articles, legislative or constitutional acts
- Speeches or statements (see box on page 7)
Translation of statements

The decision of the General Assembly currently in force concerning the reproduction of statements as official documents is contained in the note by the Secretary-General on control and limitation of documentation: “...speeches or statements by representatives of Governments, by the Secretary-General or his representative, or by persons presenting reports on behalf of committees or other bodies might be reproduced in extenso in summary records...” (see A/INF/48/1, paras. 34 and 35).

For statements not to be reproduced as official documents, the practice is to translate only the speeches of the Secretary-General and the Director-General.

What is the role of the documents management officer?

Upon receipt of the document:

- Check it against the documentation forecast. If it is not on the forecast or if it is in any way at variance with the forecast, such as being substantially longer than indicated, consult the author department for clarification
- Verify that a waiver has been received and approved for late submissions or long submissions
- Check form of document to ensure that it is complete and conforms with United Nations standards and with guidelines on control and limitation of documentation. If necessary, through Chief or Deputy Chief of Section, suggest modifications to author department and request that the document be resubmitted
- Verify that necessary references are attached
- Verify that electronic version (diskette) has been submitted
- Verify that all necessary instructions have been received – languages into which to be translated, meeting for which required, requested date of issuance etc.
- Verify that special instructions are complete
- If requested date of issuance is either unreasonable or cannot be met, consult with author department and set new date
- Log the document in by job number and symbol, indicating all information necessary for the proper processing of the document
- Set number of copies of document to be reproduced, per language (roll figures)
- Working back from the requested date of issuance, set date by which the document should be out of each respective section – reference, translation, text-processing, reproduction, distribution. The registry card (DRITS card) should contain all information.
In case of urgent documents, in particular in-session documents, call the necessary services to warn them and to make sure they are able to comply with the instructions.

Submit manuscript to next stage of processing

Following submission of the document to processing services:

- Monitor processing of all documents in order to ensure timely and simultaneous distribution
- Respond to questions from submitting department on the status of its documents
- Inform submitting department of any change in expected date of issuance of documents due to unforeseen problems
- Respond to questions from downstream processing units (reference, translation, text-processing, reproduction, distribution) in regard to documents on which they are working

Sharing of information

The flow of information between submitting offices and the documents management team must be clear and continuous. The Documents Management Section depends on submitting offices for all information in regard to its future projections (see chap. II) and its immediate requirements. In a similar vein, originating offices depend on the Documents Management Section for guidance in regard to the proper way to prepare submissions as well as for information on how their documents are progressing and on their availability. Channels of communication must work in both directions and at all times to ensure fruitful cooperation.

ATTENTION

As stated above, one of the most important roles of the Documents Management Section is the provision of information to client departments on the status of their documents in the processing chain. The officers in the Section gather that information either from DRITS or from the respective sections in the Languages Service and in the Publishing Service.

Officers in submitting departments are requested to refrain from contacting Translation Sections, Text-processing Units or the Reproduction Section directly. Attempts to influence or to change priorities serve only to delay the production of all documents in processing. In the same vein, submitting departments are requested not to submit corrections directly to Translation Sections, Text-processing Units or the Reproduction Section. The risk is great that, as a result, language versions of a document may not be based on the same text, which would cause embarrassment both to the submitting office and to the processing offices.
II. DOCUMENTATION FORECASTING

Forecasting is the necessary first step in the documentation process and is the responsibility of each submitting office. The questions to ask in the preparation of any forecast are the following: What documentation has the meeting requested? What reports or what written information does it need to do its work? The other important facet of the forecasting process is that it serves to inform the Documents Management Section and, through it, all other offices involved in document processing of future workload requirements. Without accurate forecasting, no forward planning is possible. The approved forecast serves as a blueprint for the engagement both of submitting offices and of the Documents Management Section.

Information to be contained in the forecast

♦ Complete list of documents to be submitted for processing during the period concerned or for the intergovernmental body concerned
  • Title of document
  • Legislative mandate
  • Estimated number of pages of submission
  • Original language and languages of translation required
  • Estimated date of submission and required date of issuance
  • Title and dates of meeting for which document is required

♦ List of pre-existing documents to be submitted for reproduction (re-rolls)

♦ Special instructions

LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

The legislative mandate is the formal starting point for the preparation and issuance of the document. Usually found in a resolution or decision, the mandate represents the request of the intergovernmental body to the Secretariat for information on a particular topic. In its work of verifying forecasts, one of the functions of the Documents Management Section is to ensure that those bodies receive not only all the documents they have requested but only the documents they have requested. The mandate for each document to be submitted must be indicated in the documents forecast.
Types of forecasts

♦ **Half-yearly documentation workload forecast** – submitted twice a year covering the periods January to June and July to December, this forecast contains global information on submission of parliamentary documents and publications in a specific sector for a six-month period

♦ **Documentation checklist and forecast form** – contains specific and detailed information on the pre-session documentation for one meeting, seminar, workshop or conference, including pre-existing documents to be made available to the meeting (re-rolls). Should be submitted three months in advance of the opening of the meeting

♦ **In-session documents forecast** – contains a list of documents to be submitted during a session

♦ **Publications programme** (*see chap. VI*)

Review of the forecast by the Documents Management Section

Upon receipt of the forecast, in particular the workload forecast and the check-list, the Documents Management Section will review it with a view to balancing the stated requirements against the projected workload capacity in all document processing areas. This is one of the crucial roles of the Section and can be summarized as follows:

♦ Verify that all documents on the forecast have been mandated by the intergovernmental body concerned

♦ Estimate workload indicated therein to verify that the services concerned have the capacity to handle it in the time required

♦ Consult, if necessary, with other services involved in document processing in that regard

♦ Consult with the submitting department in cases where its projected workload, in particular for translation and for reproduction, exceeds the capacity of those services and reach an agreement on modifications to the forecast

♦ Send copy of forecast, modified if required, to substantive offices and to all services in document processing

As previously mentioned, once finalized, the forecast serves as a service agreement between the submitting office and the Documents Management Section on their future work.

While it is understood that needs may change with time, any serious deviation from the forecast – submission of documents that have not been projected or that are substantially longer than indicated – will have consequences not only on the document in question but on all documents currently being processed. For this reason, forecasts must be as accurate and as complete as possible.
This section of the guidelines focuses on parliamentary documentation – those documents that are prepared for the consideration of intergovernmental bodies and others at their request, which represents the major part of the work of the Documents Management Section. The basic types are as follows:

**Pre-session documents**
- Issued in the **General Series**, in all six official languages or in the languages of the body concerned, they have the widest circulation and distribution. Their purpose is to serve as a basis of the deliberations during the session of an intergovernmental body, group of experts, working group, etc.
- Prepared and issued before the session of an intergovernmental body pursuant to a legislative mandate from that body and, thus, subject to the ten-week rule of submission and the six-week rule of issuance
- Issued under an item of the provisional agenda of the body concerned (the link between the provisional agenda and the documentation for each item of the agenda is crucial); the documents to be considered under each item should be listed in the annotations to the agenda
- Provisional agenda, annotations, reports on the status of documentation and other organizational papers required by the body to set the context of its work at a given session
- Reports of subsidiary bodies, working groups, groups of experts, etc. that report to the body in question
- Communications from member States, non-governmental organizations with the proper status etc. that have been submitted to the Secretariat with a request for circulation as official documents of the body concerned
- Addenda, revisions and corrections to previously issued documents and, on occasion, documents reissued for technical reasons (see box on page 13).

**In-session documents**
- Documents issued in the **limited (L.) series**, in all official languages or in the languages of the body concerned, their circulation is more restricted than in the General series
- Draft resolutions and draft decisions, usually submitted by individual member States or groups of States members of an intergovernmental body for deliberation and eventual adoption by that body
- Issued under the appropriate agenda item
- As draft texts, they are subject to modification in the course of deliberations
Proposed amendments to draft resolutions and decisions are also issued in the L. series.

May be issued in a revised form (Rev) following consultations and prior to adoption.

For some intergovernmental bodies, conference room papers (CRPs) (see below) are used in the place of L. documents for their in-session documentation.

Draft report of the body concerned for its approval and adoption, usually in the L. series, for some bodies as CRPs.

**Post-session documents**

- Final report of the session, including resolutions and decisions adopted, issued in the General distribution series.
- Verbatim or summary records of the session if the intergovernmental body is entitled to them by decision of the Committee on Conferences and the General Assembly.
- For the major organs of the United Nations, resolutions are issued individually after adoption. Security Council – S/RES series; General Assembly – A/RES series. For the Economic and Social Council, resolutions and decisions are issued in an E/INF document after each session. (Note – there is no E/RES series.) All are available on the Official Document System (ODS).

**Restricted documents and documents without circulation**

- Conference room papers (CRPs), which may be prepared for background or discussion purposes or, occasionally, for action by the intergovernmental body. CRPs, by their nature, are the sole property of the body for which they are prepared and receive no circulation although they may be posted on the ODS.
- Working papers (WPs) are in the same category.
- Similarly, the restricted (R) series of documentation is distributed only to participants in a meeting, but is rarely used these days.

**Miscellaneous documents**

- Used to transmit general information to intergovernmental bodies that does not necessarily fall under an item of its agenda; it carries Misc. in the symbol. Such documents are usually issued in the language of submission only and without a masthead.
Special cases – Rev, Corr, Add and Reissue

- **Rev** – “revision”, which indicates a new text superseding and replacing a previously issued document, is prepared when additional information received following the issuance of the original makes it necessary to replace the document in its entirety. When submitting a revised version of a document for processing, the originating office must indicate clearly and exactly what text has been changed in the document. If the changes are not clearly marked, the translators and text processors will be forced to redo the entire document, thereby delaying its issuance. A revision should not be used if a corrigendum will serve the purpose.

- **Corr** – “corrigendum”, a modification to a previously issued document, the purpose of which is to correct something in that document, primarily for substantive reasons; is issued as a separate document but forms an integral part of the document. May apply to any or all language versions of a document.

- **Add** – an addendum to a previously issued document to give additional information or to append a separate, though linked, report to the parent document. If it is known that a given report will have an addendum or a series of addenda, it is necessary to list that information in the documentation forecast. As with a corrigendum, an addendum is considered an integral part of the document.

- **Symbols** – all three - Rev., Add., and Corr., plus a number, are added to the symbol of the existing document.

- **Reissue** – on rare occasions, it may be necessary to reissue a document in one or more languages because of a technical error in its presentation. In such a case, an asterix is added to the original symbol, with a footnote “Reissued for technical reasons” inserted on the bottom of the cover page.

**Categories of distribution of documents**

For distribution purposes, documents and meeting records are classified in the following categories, each indicating the pattern and scope of distribution: General, Limited and Restricted (see ST/SG/189/Add.3/Rev.2).

- **General**: Documents in this category are given the widest distribution appropriate to the body concerned.

- **Limited**: This designation is used for documents of a temporary nature such as draft resolutions and amendments thereto, draft reports and other action documents. The primary distribution of documents in this category is limited to those likely to be immediately interested in the work of the body concerned.
♦ Restricted: This designation is used for documents and meeting records whose contents require at the time of issuance that they not be made public. The originating office determines the distribution of these documents in consultation with the Documents Management Section.

Documents of a provisional nature are issued first in a limited number. Such documents comprise unrevised translations circulated in the course of a meeting and certain meeting records that will later be issued in corrected form. They bear the word “PROVISIONAL” above the document symbol. In bodies with limited membership provisional documents may also bear the instruction "FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY”.

Meeting records

♦ Verbatim records (PVs) cover the proceedings in extenso, utilizing interpretations for languages other than the original.

♦ Summary records (SRs) cover the proceedings in a concise, abbreviated form. They are not intended to include each intervention or to reproduce statements textually (ST/SG/189/Add.3/Rev.2), and are divided into:

- Those which are issued initially in provisional form for limited distribution and later in final form, with corrections from delegations concerned and editorial changes incorporated, for general distribution.
- Those which are issued only once, in final form, subject to corrections. The corrections received are issued later in consolidated corrigenda covering a session or a series of meetings.
Overview

All material submitted for processing should be drafted and edited in conformity with the existing General Assembly regulations. Non-observance of the instructions in force is not only detrimental to the normal processing of documents but defeats the United Nations policies for the control and limitation of documentation, as set out by Member States.

To ensure absolute legibility, manuscripts must always be typed. Hand-written texts are not acceptable. Manuscripts must be accompanied by their electronic version in a compatible diskette, independently of their processing scheme (reviser’s draft, fair copy, translation, typing). Only one document must be filed on any diskette.

The submitting office should carefully review manuscripts, not only from the viewpoint of substance but also to see that they are clear and legible and that they have been prepared and edited in accordance with the instructions in force. Documents not in conformity with existing guidelines will be returned to the submitting office with an explanation of the necessary modifications.

All United Nations documents should be prepared in Word. All Word documents have the extension ".doc" and the templates have the extension ".dot". For all official documents these should not be changed.

Examples of cover pages of the various forms of documents are found in the annex.

What elements should be found on the cover page of an official document?

Masthead: The following elements should normally appear on the masthead:

- The words "United Nations";
- The United Nations emblem;
- The name of the principal organ (General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, Trusteeship Council, Secretariat) or of certain other major organs (in particular, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and major conferences convened under the auspices of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council);
Masthead or no masthead?

The general rule is that every official parliamentary document, thus a document for translation and issuance in the official languages of the intergovernmental body concerned, requires a masthead. On occasion, official documents are not issued in all languages of the body, for example corrigenda. A masthead is still required because of the official nature of the document.

Documents for which a masthead is not required include the following:

♦ Unofficial documents or documents that are submitted for information purposes only, such as the miscellaneous (Misc.) series, which are not normally translated.

♦ Some conference room papers (CRPs) and working papers (WPs), also not translated and with no official distribution, that are immediately required for consideration by meetings.

Substantive offices are reminded that all documents with or without masthead must pass through the Documents Management Section.

Right-hand symbol block: The following elements should normally appear: (a) Indication of distribution category ("GENERAL", "LIMITED" OR "RESTRICTED"); (b) document symbol; (c) date; and (d), the original language of the document.

♦ Distribution category (see chap. III above)

♦ Document symbol: the symbol consists of some or all of the following elements: (a) a letter denoting the main organ to whose body of documentation the document belongs; (b) a letter and number denoting the subsidiary body for which the document is issued; (c) an indication of the year or the session; (d) a letter or letters indicating the distribution category, if other than General distribution; (e) an Arabic number indicating the serial number of the individual document; and (f) a suffix indicating a modification of the text.

Building the document symbol by elements:

- Indication of the principal organ of the body to which the document belongs, followed by a slash:
  - A/- (General Assembly)
  - S/- (Security Council)
  - E/- (Economic and Social Council)
  - ST/- (Secretariat)
  - CD/- (Conference on Disarmament)
  - ECE/- (Economic Commission for Europe)
  - TD/- or UNCTAD/- (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)
— FCCC/- (Framework Convention on Climate Change)
— ICCD/- (Convention to Combat Desertification)
— CERD/- (Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination)
— CRC/- (Committee on the Rights of the Child)
— CCPR/- (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights)

• Second degree indication:
— CONF. plus number/- (conference mandated by one of the major organs)
— AC. plus number/- (mandated committee)
— TRANS/- and TRADE/- (major ECE divisions)
— CN. plus number/- (commission)
— B/- (UNCTAD Trade and Development Board)
— COP. plus number/- (Conference of the Parties)

• Third degree indication, if necessary:
— WG. plus number/- (working group)
— SC. plus number/- (standing committee)
— Sub. plus number/- (subcommission)

• Session of the body or year during which the session is being held, which may differ from the year in which the document is submitted

• Indicator of distribution category, if not General, or document type:
— L. (Limited)
— R. (Restricted)
— CRP. (Conference room paper)
— WP. (Working paper)

• Arabic numeral to indicate the specific document

• If required, suffix plus number to indicate addition to the text or modification of the text:
— Add. (addendum)
— Corr. (corrigendum)
— Rev. (revision)

• Date of the document: the date indicated on the document must be the date on which it is submitted to the Documents Management Section

• Original language of the document

— The language of the original text of the document should always be indicated under the date in block capital letters, in the following form:

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH
— When part of the text is submitted in one language and part in another, the following form should be used:

ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH

— When two or more separate texts in different languages are submitted as equally authentic original languages (as may be the case for, say, a convention), this should be shown as follows:

ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH, FRENCH AND SPANISH

Thus, an oblique (/) is normally used when the original is made up of parts of texts in other languages; commas plus the word "AND" are normally used when there are two or more full and equally authentic texts submitted as originals.

— Where different parts of the document are translated from different languages, this should be shown, for example, as follows:

ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC/FRENCH/ RUSSIAN /SPANISH

— When a document contains one or more annexes submitted in a language different from that of the main document, the original language of each annex should be noted in square brackets.

ORIGINAL: ARABIC/ENGLISH

Annex I
TITLE OF THE ANNEX

[Original: English]

Annex II
TITLE OF THE ANNEX

[Original: Arabic]

— If, for some reason, a document is not issued in all the working languages of the organ concerned, as may be the case, for example, with corrections, that fact should be indicated as follows:

CHINESE, ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN ONLY

♦ Corner notation: In a document prepared for a session of an intergovernmental body, the following elements should appear in the upper left-hand corner, below the masthead:

• Name of the body, if subsidiary to that indicated in the masthead, in full capital letters (this is an either/or situation in that no organ is listed twice – once in the masthead and once in the corner notation)
• Name of the body for which the document is prepared, if it is subsidiary to that listed above, with initial capitals only
• Session of the body
• Place and dates of the session:
  — Place is indicated only if the body is meeting elsewhere than its normal meeting location, for example ECOSOC, when it meets in Geneva rather than New York
  — Dates are not listed for those bodies that only meet once a year, but they should be listed for special sessions of those bodies; dates are always given for special conferences
• Number of the item of the agenda or provisional agenda

♦ Titles – all centered

• Complete title of agenda item, plus sub-item if necessary, in block capitals
• Secondary title, initial capitals and underlined, relating to the particular area of interest covered by the report
• Descriptive title giving the nature of the document (report, memorandum, study) and the author or originating body (Secretary-General, special rapporteur, organization)
• Corrigendum or addendum, with initial capital and underlined, if required

Format: general guidelines

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/242, among others, the following elements should be included in a report originating in the Secretariat: (a) a summary of the report; (b) consolidated conclusions, recommendations and other proposed actions; and (c) relevant background information. In addition the Assembly reiterated that all documents submitted to legislative organs by the Secretariat and expert bodies for consideration and action should have conclusions and recommendations in bold print.

♦ At the beginning of every document, a summary should appear providing a comprehensive but concise description of the contents of the document. Where appropriate, the summary may include, in brief, the proposals, conclusions and recommendations contained therein

♦ The table of contents should follow the summary

♦ An introduction containing background information, including the legislative mandate, should contain only what it is essential to bring to the notice of the organ to which the report is addressed

♦ Conclusions and recommendations are to be set out in boldface type and are to appear in the first chapter of a report prepared by the Secretariat
Within the body of the report of an intergovernmental organ, the **account of the deliberations** should be concise and should be supplemented by cross-references to the meeting records. Summary records of an organ should **not** be included in its report.

At the end of each document a very succinct indication of the points for discussion and of the main issues requiring intergovernmental consideration and review is included.

When a document is prepared on the basis of Governments' replies to a questionnaire or of other submissions, such replies and submissions should not be reproduced **in extenso** in the body or in an annex of the document. Should the body concerned wish to see the texts of such replies and submissions, the Secretariat should make them available in the original languages and in an appropriate form.

Texts available in easily accessible documents, in particular, verbatim or summary records, working papers or extracts thereof, should not be included as annexes.

Texts that are not easily accessible should not be annexed when their substance can reasonably be incorporated in the main body of the report.
V. SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS

The General Assembly, in section III of its resolution 55/222 of 23 December 2000, requested the Secretary-General to ensure that documentation is available in accordance with the six-week rule for the distribution of documents simultaneously in the six official languages of the General Assembly. Late submission is one of the main causes for the low rate of compliance with the six-week rule on the issuance of documentation. Among reasons given for late submission are the need to include more up-to-date information or developments, the need for lengthy consultations before preparation of reports, late receipt of inputs from Member States and/or other departments/agencies and the fact that events reported on were scheduled too close to the session of the intergovernmental body that requires the document.

**Deadlines for submission**

**Ten weeks** before the opening of a session, all documents to which the six-week rule established in General Assembly resolution 33/56 applies (all material to be translated) shall have been submitted to the Documents Management Section.

**Eight weeks** before the opening of a session, the department or office concerned shall circulate, with the annotated agenda of the session, a report on the state of preparation of the necessary documentation in all required languages, with a full explanation of the circumstances of any delays.

**Four weeks** before the opening of a session, all documents to which the six-week rule does not apply (non-translated material and re-issues of existing documents) shall have been submitted to the Documents Management Section.

For **in-session documents**, even for a one page document, a minimum of 2 half working days delay between the time a document is received by Documents Management Section and the time it will be delivered to the meeting room is to be respected.

The date of submission of a document is that on which the complete and final text reaches the Documents Management Section; that becomes the **date of document**.

**Corrections** to documents will not be accepted after they have been submitted to the Documents Management Section. After submission only corrigenda will be issued.
Length of submissions

Reports of subsidiary organs or of expert groups or other reports not originating in the Secretariat are to be as brief as possible and are not to exceed the desirable limit of 10,700 words (around 20 physical pages).

Reports originating in the Secretariat must not exceed 8,500 words (around 16 physical pages).

Quality of manuscripts submitted for processing

Manuscripts must always be typed on one side of the paper only. Hand-written texts will not be accepted.

Manuscripts submitted for editing must be typed in double spacing to facilitate the incorporation of legible editorial corrections. Single-spaced manuscripts will not be accepted for editing.

Copies of the original versions that have to be submitted for translation should also be prepared in double spacing.

All pages of a manuscript must be of the same size and must be numbered consecutively.

Paper margins

United Nations Office at Geneva manuscript page size corresponds to the ISO A4 size paper (210mm × 297mm).

Page length for normal pages should be at line 25 cm (approximately).

Printing Font Times New Roman 12, which is the United Nations standard.

Cover page margins

Top margin: 4 cm
Bottom margin: 3 cm
Left margin: 3 cm
Right margin: 1.5 cm

Distribution, symbol, date, etc. should begin at line 4 (4 cm) on screen.

Name of the Conference should be typed at line 9.08.

Normal pages

Manuscripts must be typed on one side of the paper only.

Margins: Top margin: 1 cm
Bottom margin: 3.5 cm
Left margin: 3 cm
Right margin: 1.5 cm

Formatting codes used in preparing texts (excluding tables, charts and graphs) should be as basic as possible.

The hyphenation feature of MS Word should not be used.
Headers, defined at the beginning of the document, must be put at line 1. Specific tab at 0 and 12 cm (relative).

Tabulation: left margin at 0, tab set at every 1.2 cm.

The titles, subtitles, headings and subheadings should be typed in upper and lower case style only, using all diacritics, as required by the language spelling rules.

Page numbers should be generated through the header/footer function of MS Word. No manual page numbering should be used.

No special format should be applied to quotation matter in the manuscript or to the text of bibliographies.

As a rule, all notes to the main text should be prepared as endnotes. Footnotes should generally only be used for draft resolutions, decisions or conclusions to be adopted by an intergovernmental organ. When footnotes are called for, the automatic footnote function of MS Word should be used.

Number of copies

The number of copies of the Translation check-list to be provided should be calculated as 1 copy per language for translation + 1 clean copy to be sent to Reproduction Section + 1 copy to Documents Management officer.

Reference material

“References” include material that has been previously translated and issued in official United Nations documentation.

Such previously translated material incorporated into a new manuscript must be provided in all languages (including the language of submission) in order to ensure that no time is lost in retranslating already existing texts and to ensure consistency among translations of the same material. Failure to submit necessary references may also result in the issuance of a language version that differs from that of an already existing text.

In addition to supplying the necessary references, drafting officers should give clear indications in the margin of the manuscript, if they are not provided in explicit footnotes or parenthetical notes, to the documents and paragraph numbers of such previously translated material, whether directly or indirectly quoted, or whether substantially the same but with some modifications.

All other available background documentation, including unofficial translations, should be attached to the manuscript submitted for translation as “guidance” material.

No submission is considered complete until all reference material has been received.
Diskette

Manuscripts must be accompanied by their electronic version in Word and PDF formats. Only one document manuscript should be stored on a single diskette. If the size of the file exceeds the storage capacity of a single diskette, it can be filed on a zip disk. Should there be a need to compress the file, the program that should be used is Winzip. The diskette should be properly labelled and identified. The file name on the diskette label should match the file name in the medium. It is recommended that submitters use the symbols number attributed to the document as the file name with .doc as an extension for word files. For multiple files, it is recommended that a folder be created using the document symbol number as the folder name.

Software to be used

Documents to be processed by the Documents Management Section should be prepared using Microsoft Word and Excel only. Should submitting organs choose to use a different software for any elements of a document, the product should be converted to embedded objects in the Word file by the submitter.

Graphic material (graphs, charts, maps, photographs, etc.) that forms part of the document should be submitted in digital form in one of the following preferred formats that can be imported by MS Word: .jpg, .gif, .tif, .eps and .bmp. It is absolutely necessary, especially when the original version is to be translated, that background data that was used to create the graphic material should be provided.

Requests for processing of documents

All requests for processing of documents must be submitted to the Documents Management Section with an appropriate form iDris request properly filled in:

Symbol: Symbol of the document. If there is no symbol (e.g. for informal translation) insert “none” plus the main symbol of the meeting in brackets (e.g. (CD), (UNEP), (UNDP)).

Short title: Title or a short description of the document so that it can be easily identified – particularly important in the case of informal working papers bearing no symbol.

Orig.Lang: Initial in English capital letters of language of submission. If document contains more than one language – even if sections not in the principal language are very short – all languages should be indicated.

Pages in: Indicate exact number of pages being submitted, counting title page and short pages.

Translation: Initial(s) in capital letters of language(s) into which document is to be translated.
To follow: To be completed, for example, if a document has been split and the first part is ready to be submitted in final version. To avoid any confusion, indicate in special instructions “N.B. more to follow”.

Session No: Indicate session number if applicable.

Ten-week rule and Six-week rule: Applies to pre-session documents only.

Date and Place: Specify opening and closing dates and place of meeting.

Agenda item: To be indicated when the agenda item figures on the document.

Date needed: Indicate the date and time requested by the Secretary of the meeting for distribution. However, if the document is urgent it is prudent to consult the Documents Management officer. A minimum delay of 24 hours is requested for even very short documents.

Organ/Division: Indicate the exact title of meeting.

Consulting Official: Substantive officer responsible for submission (usually the Secretary of the meeting). In the case of larger meetings this could be the Officer-in-Charge of a Working Group or Sub-Committee.

Phone and Room: Indicate the telephone number and office number where the consulting official can most easily be reached at all times.

Revisers draft-Fair copy: To be filled in when translations will not be reproduced nor distributed by the Publishing Service. A reviser’s draft (RD) may be required in the case of an urgent translation, which has to be read by a substantive officer (in draft form). A fair copy (FC) may be required if the translation is to be photocopied and circulated by the Secretariat in a small working or a group of experts.

Indicate under “Special instructions” how the document is to be delivered (“Please phone (extension) when ready”).

Special instructions: Anything not already covered by other indications (chargeable account code, specific spacing required if other than the standard spacing, any special requirements of the originating department for additional copies other than the normal distribution pattern, stating clearly names of recipients, room numbers and the like).

If draft includes previously translated text: Indicate here if the text contains material that has already been translated.

Submitting Officer, Phone and Room: Name of Conference Secretary submitting the document accompanied by his/her signature, room and phone.
United Nations publications include major studies and reports, yearbooks, periodicals and other recurrent publications, *Official Records*, proceedings of conferences and of some seminars and symposia, proceedings of the main organs of the United Nations. These publications are issued primarily for official use but most are also placed on sale to the public.

All publications must have an appropriate legislative mandate and must have received all required administrative approvals before submission to the Documents Management Section; they must meet standards established by the Organization for editorial quality and accuracy, project a consistent and positive image of the Organization, and have clearly defined substantive and public-use objectives. In addition, they should be timely and easy to use and understand by the intended audience. Publications are disseminated so as to reach the maximum target audience.

All proposed publications must receive the authorization of the **Publications Board**. The role of the Board is to determine the policies governing the preparation, production, distribution and sale of documents, and to coordinate the planning and supervise the execution of the publications programme.
## ELEMENTS REQUIRED

### FRONT MATTER

It should be paginated in bold lower-case Roman numerals at the bottom of the page, the title page being counted as page i, although no folios should actually appear on the title-page or its verso. Note that this pagination is in addition to the consecutive pagination of the entire text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of the elements</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cover</strong></td>
<td>The outside cover bears only the following elements: (a) the document symbol in the upper right-hand corner. When sales publications bear an art cover, it may be desirable for aesthetic reasons to omit the symbol. When the symbol does not appear on the cover, it must appear in the tagline on the outside back cover; (b) The title of the work; (c) The indication of the series and serial number (where relevant); (d) The subtitle, volume number or supplement number (where required); (e) The United Nations emblem (should be inserted close to the name “United Nations”); (f) The name “United Nations”, either in the language of issue or, in the case of bilingual or trilingual publications, in the two or three relevant languages. That name, which identifies the United Nations as the publisher of the work, should always appear at the bottom of the page. The cover may also bear the name of the department, regional commission, major conference or other United Nations body in which the publication originated. Attribution may not normally be made on the cover to any unit of the Secretariat smaller than a department, office or regional commission. Such attribution should appear on the upper part of the cover with less typographical prominence than the name “United Nations” appearing at the bottom. Where the seat of the organizational unit concerned is not New York, mention of the place name may be made after, or under, the name of the unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spine</strong></td>
<td>It includes the title of the work (or, if space is limited, a short version of it), the volume number when appropriate; the words “United Nations” and the United Nations emblem. The spine should read from top to bottom, not from bottom to top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Half-title</strong></td>
<td>It includes the title of the publication standing alone on a page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title-page</strong></td>
<td>The recto of the title-page bears the (a) document symbol in the upper right-hand corner; (b) where relevant, the indication of the series and serial number; (c) the title of the work; (d) where required, the subtitle, volume number or supplement number; and (e) on the lower part of the page, the United Nations imprint, namely, the words “United Nations, New York” – identifying the United Nations as the sole publisher regardless of the place of issue of the publication – and the year of publication. Where</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
appropriate, the upper part may bear the name of the department, regional commission, major conference or comparable unit in which the publication originated, such name being less typographical prominence than the name “United Nations”. Attribution may not be made to any unit of the Secretariat smaller than a department, office or regional commission.

The verso of the title-page normally bears (a) the document symbol, if any, and the sales number; (b) the price of the publication; (c) The standard note (*) concerning the United Nations symbols if there is not an explanatory note. Otherwise it should normally be included in the explanatory notes. (*) In English: Note symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

| Letter of transmittal | A letter of transmittal may be included in a publication, at the request of the Secretary-General, by one or more of the experts or consultants. It should not refer by name to members of the secretariat who provided assistance in the cooperation of the report. When such committees or groups wish to acknowledge such assistance, they should be advised that the appropriate way of doing so is by mentioning the department or office concerned. |
| Foreword | A foreword is usually written and signed by a person other than the author. It contains material that does not bear directly on the subject-matter of the publication. It may deal with the genesis, purpose and scope of the subject-matter and may include acknowledgements of indebtedness. |
| Preface | It is normally prepared by the author and it should not be signed, except if the prefatory remarks are not purely formal or explanatory. In that case, they should, as appropriate, be signed by the Secretary-General, by the executive secretary of a regional commission, the representative of the Secretary-General in charge of a major conference, or other official comparable authority. |
| Table of contents | The table of contents should be headed “contents” (French: table des matières; Spanish: Índice). It should include the list of tables, figures and maps. |
| Errata list | Errors detected at a stage of production of a publication at which it is not feasible to correct them should be listed in the front matter, under the heading “Errata”. The errata list normally appears immediately after the table of contents. If it is not possible to include it in the front matter, a separate sheet containing the errata may be prepared and attached to the publication at the time of distribution. |
| Explanatory notes | They include editorial notes, a list of abbreviations and disclaimers. These elements may appear under separate headings or may be combined under one heading. |
| Summary, conclusions and recommendations | They may be considered to be part of the front matter and the pages may be numbered with lower case roman numerals. |
It may, in the case of a study or report, comprise an introduction and the substantive chapters or, in the case of a bulletin or periodical, separate articles or essays, each with its own introduction and substantive chapters.

The introduction may state the subject-matter and the authority under which the document has been prepared (for example, a resolution of a United Nations organ or the terms of reference of a secretariat unit) and may explain the organization of the material.

**END MATTER**

It may include any or all of the elements mentioned below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of the elements</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annexes and appendices</td>
<td>Matter added to the main body of a manuscript should normally be identified as an “annex”. Matter added to an annex should be identified as an “appendix”. The word “Annex” or “Appendix” and the appropriate number, if any, should be centered as a heading above the title of the annex or appendix, in initial capital and lowercase type, underscored in typescript. The title of the annex or appendix should be in full capitals. Annexes or appendices should be numbered with roman numerals, beginning with I, preceded by the word “Annex” or “Appendix”. However a single annex or appendix should not be numbered, but should be headed “Annex” or “Appendix” only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Source and other reference notes are normally given at the end of major divisions in United Nations documents and Official Records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>The words to be defined in the glossary should be listed in alphabetical order unless some other logical order is implied. Each keyword should begin on a separate line and one or two spaces should be left between entries. The keyword should not be capitalized unless it is a proper noun or adjective and would normally require an initial capital letter, nor should it be underlined unless it would normally be underlined (or italicized) in a text. Each keyword should be followed by colon. The definitions should be aligned on the left in such a way that the keywords stand out prominently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography or reference list</td>
<td>Information regarding the preparation and presentation of bibliographies and reference lists can be obtained from in-house manuals used for United Nations Bibliographic System (UNBIS) of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An index, where required, should be submitted for printing as soon as possible after the manuscript proper has been sent to the Publishing Service. If the text has paragraph numbers, the index should give references to paragraph numbers rather than to page numbers.

In certain publications issued in a series on a given subject, a list of other publications in the same series has been included at the end of the text or on the reverse of the front and back covers. The inclusion of such cumulative lists is discouraged: it is very difficult to give up-to-date information concerning the availability of translations in as much as earlier items may be out of print and translations may be at various stages of production.

The back cover of publications normally carries a sales notice, in the six official languages of the United Nations, explaining how to obtain United Nations publications. It carries also a tagline in English, showing the place of printing, the price, the job number, the date of printing and the print run, the document symbol if any, and the sales numbers.

**Formatting of a publication**

Originals should be sharply defined black on white, without any colours or stains. Computer printouts should also be evenly contrasted black on plain white sheets, never on “laid” or “zebra paper”, and, to this end, it is urged that print support equipment be regularly serviced and maintained. The process is sensitive to any overlay, masking strip or correcting fluid applied to the surface of the original. Whenever it is necessary to introduce some comments regarding a page original, these can be added on a photocopy that has been scored through to avoid any chance of accidental reproduction or noted on self-adhesive slips, of the removable type only, attached to the original in question.

**Text area**

It is essential that head and left and right hand margins be uniform throughout and that the text area of the page, including mastheads, does not exceed the following frame dimension:

- **A4 format:** 17 cm x 26 cm (Margins: Top: 3 cm, Bottom: 3.5 cm, Left: 2 cm, Right: 2 cm)
- **A5 format:** 11.5 cm x 17.5 cm (Margins: Top: 1.5 cm, Bottom: 2 cm, Left: 2 cm, Right: 1.5 cm)
Use of the United Nations emblem

The emblem should appear on the cover page of all the United Nations publications beside or above the name “United Nations” at the bottom of the page. The emblem may not be used in combination with the emblem of any organization outside the United Nations system without the express authorization of the Secretary-General. When the United Nations emblem appears together with that of another body of the United Nations system, the emblem of each should appear in combination with the name of the organization to which it relates. The emblem may be used together with the insignia of individual Governments only with the express permission of the Publications Board.

Headings, running headings and pagination

Headings for chapters or other such subdivisions of text carried over to a fresh page should appear on line 6 in large-format frames and on line 5 of A5 frames, with running heads omitted and folios inserted beneath a two-line space on the bottom line of the frame, either centred or aligned right on recto (odd) pages and left on verso (even) pages. On subsequent pages, folios should be entered at the first character position of a verso running head on line 1 (normally the volume title, abridged if necessary and centred on the frame width), or at last character position of this line for a recto running head (with a centered subdivision title), separated from the first line of text by a two-line space.

Where pages are simply numbered, without running heads, folios should be consistently placed in identical positions throughout and may appear centered or aligned left on verso, right on recto pages, in either the top or bottom line of the frame, again separated from the text by a two-line space.

Tables and graphics

Tables, graphs, charts, diagrams and illustrations to be printed in landscape format should always be mounted with their top sides adjacent to the left margin, regardless of whether they appear on a recto or verso page. Care should be taken to ensure that tables spread across facing pages are properly aligned.

Any questions regarding page make-up should be referred to the Chief, Pre-press and Electronic Printing-Photocopy Unit, Reproduction Section. Only first-generation originals should be submitted for printing, not photocopies or pages extracted from a previously printed text.

Finalization of submission

For submission as “camera-ready copy”, the document should be complete including cover, title page or masthead and logos, diagrams, tables and pagination, ready for reproduction.

A text for the spine title, abridged if necessary, giving the publication’s main title (and, where applicable, the volume and part number), preceded by the name or usual abbreviation of the issuing organ/agency, should be provided for any work comprising 100 or more printed pages bound in a drawn-on cover.
All United Nations publications, whether printed internally or externally, must carry a job number as indicated on the DRITS card by the Documents Management Section.


ISSN: It is the responsibility of the issuing department or division to obtain International Standard Serial Numbers (ISSNs) for their own serial publications and to ensure that this number is included for each issue and language version of a serial publication on the DRITS submission form to the Documents Management Section.

Photographs

Photographs, with or without captions, accompanying a text destined for offset reproduction should be of very high quality, sharply contrasted prints wherever the possibility of meeting such criteria exists. It is not possible to use half-tone plates (i.e., photographs extracted from other published sources). Photos are not acceptable for inclusion in pre-session or in-session documents, or for working papers.

Accompanying instructions

Press-run indications, distribution requirements or specific requests regarding colour choice, special grades and finishes of cover and paper stock, etc. should be clear and definitive. Standard paper stock for text printed internally is matt white offset weighing 80 grammes per square metre, while that used for covers is normally more than double this weight, ranging between 180-260 grammes. Requests for non-standard printing stock are accepted only when the requesting department has furnished the number of the budgetary account from which actual purchase costs may be debited. Where feasible, colour artwork covers will be printed in a single global press run for all language versions – thus, reversed blocks for any texts requiring individual translations should be excluded from such covers.

Reprints

All requests for reprints of publications should be addressed to the Documents Management Section. Reprints of publications will require the prior authorization of the Publications Board. Submitting officers are requested to verify the amount of copies requested before they submit a publication in order to avoid having to make reprints later.

Special printing requests

Printing requests for stationery, envelopes, forms, invitations, letterheads, business cards etc. should be forwarded for approval to the Chief, Procurement and Contracts Unit, Purchase and Transportation Section (Room 37-2), and for registration and submission to the Documents Management Section.
Deadlines

All jobs submitted for printing should be supplied within reasonable time limits for their completion, having regard to their size and complexity. It is not possible to estimate production schedules until all elements of a publication have been furnished, i.e., its cover, spine, tagline, title page and verso typographically prepared, typeset, proof-read, corrected, revised and passed “O.K. for press”, and a complete set of text pages presented in a form suitable for imposition. Pre-session and in-session documents take priority over all other publications or printed matter produced internally.

The preparation of publications takes at least 10 weeks provided that they are submitted “camera ready”. A document is “camera ready”, when the cover page, text and graphics are in their final form and ready for printing. If a publication is submitted in more than a language, “camera ready”, a period of 10 weeks should be accounted for the preparation of each version. When translation is involved in the preparation of a publication the time requested for the translation should be added to the above deadlines.

Software

All publications should be prepared in WORD, the official United Nations text processing software. Framework and PageMaker software are highly recommended to prepare publications, especially when they contain graphs, pictures and photographs.

NOTE: A publication listed in the Official Publications Programme cannot be replaced by a new publication item without the prior authorization of the United Nations Publications Board.
The United Nations Official Document System (ODS), which was previously entitled the Optical Disc System, (UNOG entry: http://www.ods.unog.ch/ods/; UNHQ entry: http://ods.un.org) is a unified system for storing and retrieving United Nations documents that allows users to search for and retrieve documents via high-speed networks. The parliamentary documentation and official records stored and available online on United Nations networks are described and indexed using the structure of the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBIS). They include pre-session, in-session and post-session documentation for the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies and the Trusteeship Council, and for global conferences convened by the United Nations as well as for other meetings included in the Calendar of Conferences and Meetings authorized by the General Assembly. The documents and official records are stored in the official languages of the United Nations: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Selected documents are also available in German.

The database comprises the full text of all United Nations parliamentary documents, including resolutions and decisions issued at United Nations Headquarters in New York and the United Nations Office at Geneva since 1993 (with selected earlier coverage), and at the United Nations Office at Vienna since 1997, as well as documents from the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific beginning in 1997. In addition to parliamentary documentation, all currently valid United Nations administrative issuances (ST/Al/-, ST/IC/- and ST/SGB/-) are included in the database.

Documents are stored in text format (from word processing) and in portable document format (PDF) (converted from text or scanned images). It is preferable to use the PDF format, in particular in case of Arabic and Chinese languages.

Also available are the daily New York Journal, the Geneva Bulletin and the Vienna Journal. Note that the latter is issued only for special sessions and conferences in Vienna. These publications provide information on the meetings and main events taking place at United Nations offices.

ODS offers two separate search forms:

- a simple search allows the user to search the United Nations documentation of General and Limited series of distribution by document symbol, by publication date and by a full-text search.

- an advanced search gives access to documents of both General/Limited and Restricted series of distribution. Documents of Restricted series of distribution are put into the Informal papers field. The advanced search page allows the user to select among all available databases and to search by all available search criteria.
DECISION BY INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODY ON DOCUMENTATION TO BE CONSIDERED AT ITS NEXT SESSION

At the conclusion of their sessions, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies adopt a decision wherein are listed the pre-session documents that the body expects to consider and to take action on at its next session. Based on the resolutions and decisions adopted at the session, that list, although subject to modification by the bureau of the body, serves as the basis for the documentation forecast. Substantive offices and Committee Secretaries are requested to consider the possibility of extending that practice to the intergovernmental bodies for which they provide services.

REPORTING CYCLES

Intergovernmental organs could review their reporting cycles with a view to either changing the reporting period in order to allow for adequate time for the drafting of their report or introducing periodicity in the form of biennial instead of annual reports.

AVOIDING DELAYS IN SUBMISSION

Author departments often delay submission in order to include the most up-to-date information in their reports. Intergovernmental organs may wish to authorize substantive departments to prepare reports with an earlier cut-off date, with the possibility of including additional information, if necessary, in addenda to the parent document.
ANNEX

Examples of Cover Presentation

The words “UNITED NATIONS”

The acronym of the principal organ

The United Nations emblem

Distribution category i.e. “General”, “Restricted” and “Limited”

The date given is the one on which the document is submitted to the Documents Management Section

The name of the principal organ (General Assembly, Security Council, Economic Council, Trusteeship, Secretariat) or of certain other major autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies i.e. UNDP, UNCTAD and UNIDO.

The name of language indicated refers to the main document

UNITED NATIONS

Distr. XXXX

XXXXX

Original: XXXXX

Document symbol
UNITED NATIONS

COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities
First session
Geneva, 18-27 April 2002
Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Here should appear in full capital letters, the name of parent subsidiary organ.

Place and date (s) of the session.

Here should go the session number.

Here should appear the name in small letters, with an initial capital for the first word and for any other words that would normally be spelt with an initial capital, of the subsidiary organ.

The item number of the agenda or provisional agenda to which the documents relates should be included here.
JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Evaluation of the Translation Process in the United Nations

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit

Addendum

"General" titles indicate the general subject to which the document relates, in many cases an agenda item. It should be written in capital letters.

In the "descriptive" title, the nature of the document (report, draft resolution, study, etc.) and the author or originating body (Secretary-General, special rapporteur, delegation, or an organization) should be shown in a descriptive title, which should be centered, in initial capital and lower-case.

Under the general title there may be a "secondary" title relating to a particular area of interest within the general subject. (It should be noted, however, that a sub-item of an agenda item is treated as part of the "general title".

Additional subtitles, are the titles related of addenda and corrigenda, which should be centered below the other titles, in initial capital and lower-case letters, underlined.
The masthead of all subsequent pages of an official United Nations document should only have the following elements (title, subtitle or other text should not be included in this part):

For even pages on the top right hand side of the document:

```
XXXXX
Page xx
Annex xx
```

Symbol of the document

The word "Page" and the number of the page

The word "Annex" should be included only when that page refers to an annex, and if more than one its number in Roman numerals (I, II, III). Pagination should be continued from the main document.

For odd pages on the top left hand side of the document:

```
XXXXX
Page xx
Annex xx
```
Some Examples of Official Mastheads

UNITED NATIONS A

General Assembly

UNITED NATIONS E

Economic and Social Council

UNITED NATIONS HRI

International Human Rights Instruments
Examples of cover presentation

The words "UNITED NATIONS"

The acronym of the principal organ

The United Nations emblem

Distribution category i.e. "General", "Restricted" and "Limited"

The date given is the one on which the document is submitted to the Documents Management Section

Document symbol

The name of language indicated refers to the main document

The name of the principal organ (General Assembly, Security Council, Economic Council, Trusteeship, Secretariat) or of certain other major autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies i.e. UNDP, UNCTAD and UNIDO.

UNITED NATIONS

Xxxxx xxxxx

Distr. XXXX

Original: XXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXX

XXXXX

XXX

Original: XXXXX
JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Evaluation of the Translation Process in the United Nations

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit

Addendum

“General” titles indicate the general subject to which the document relates, in many cases an agenda item. It should be written in capital letters.

In the “descriptive” title, the nature of the document (report, draft resolution, study, etc.) and the author or originating body (Secretary-General, special rapporteur, delegation, or an organization) should be shown in a descriptive title, which should be centered, in initial capital and lower-case.

Under the general title there may be a “secondary” title relating to a particular area of interest within the general subject. (It should be noted, however, that a sub-item of an agenda item is treated as part of the “general title”.

Additional subtitles, are the titles related of addenda and corrigenda, which should be centered below the other titles, in initial capital and lower-case letters, underlined.
The masthead of all subsequent pages of an official United Nations document should only have the following elements (title, subtitle or other text should not be included in this part):

For even pages on the top right hand side of the document:

- XXXXX
- Page xx
- Annex xx

For odd pages on the top left hand side of the document:

- XXXXX
- Page xx
- Annex xx

Symbol of the document

The word “Page” and the number of the page

The word “Annex” should be included only when that page refers to an annex, and if more than one its number in Roman numerals (I, II, III). Pagination should be continued from the main document.
Some examples of official mastheads

UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

UNITED NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

UNITED NATIONS

HRI

International Human Rights Instruments