Resolution 883 (1987)[1]

Assembly debates on current affairs

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering its Resolution 844, adopted on 4 July 1985, by which it introduced a new procedure on current affairs debates for a trial period of two years ;

2. Observing that this procedure, which supplements the other ways in which the Assembly and its members can rapidly express their views about certain events, has given overall satisfaction and should therefore be maintained ;

3. Believing, however, that the provisions concerning requests for current affairs debates, particularly in respect of the time-limit, ought to be made more flexible,

4. Resolves to insert a new Rule 48.a in its Rules of Procedure as follows :

‘‘Rule 48.a

Current affairs debates

5. In the course of each part-session the Assembly may hold one current affairs debate if proposed by its Bureau.

6. The request for a current affairs debate must be submitted to the Bureau by at least two political groups and at least two national delegations, and must, normally, be tabled five days before the opening of the part-session - unless events justify a shorter period, in which case the Assembly's decision to order that such a debate be held shall require a two thirds majority of the votes cast[2], comprising at least one-third of the Representatives of the Assembly.

7. A choice, if there are several requests, shall be made by the Bureau of the Assembly, but the Bureau may decide not to propose any.

8. A current affairs debate may not be devoted to any item already appearing on the agenda for the part-session, including subjects proposed for urgent debate followed by vote, tabled under the provision of Rule 48 above.

9. A current affairs debate may not exceed one and a half hours in length, and speaking time shall be limited to five minutes for all members except the first speaker, who shall be allowed ten minutes.

10. At the close of the current affairs debate, the Assembly shall not pronounce on any texts, although the question at issue may be referred by the Bureau to the appropriate committee for a report at a later stage, and written declarations (Rule 49 below) may be tabled."

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1. See Doc. 5746, report of the Committee on Rules of Procedure. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 1 July 1987.
2. Only affirmative and negative votes shall count in calculating the number of votes cast (Rule 35, paragraph 4, of the Rules of Procedure).