UNITED NATIONS DOCUMENTATION OVERVIEW

DOCUMENTS MANAGEMENT SECTION

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WHAT IS A UN DOCUMENT?

"A document is a text submitted for examination to a principal or subsidiary organ of the United Nations, it usually focuses on one or more issues on the agenda of the organ concerned." (ST/AI/189/Add.3/Rev.2)

WHAT IS A DOCUMENT SYMBOL?
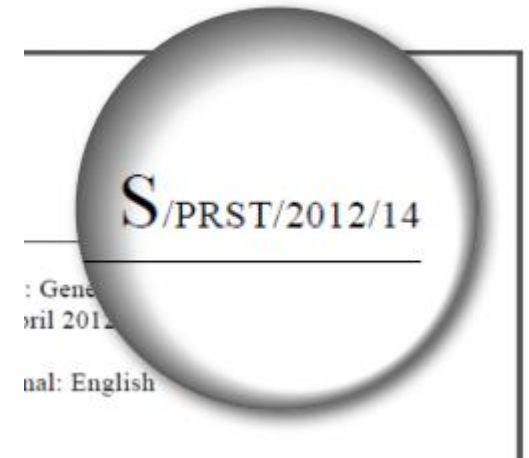
Combination of numbers and letters

Unique identifier for a UN document
- 1 symbol for all languages

Indicates the organ to which the document is related.

More information
http://research.un.org/en/docs/symbols

S/PRST/2012/14

DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: FIRST COMPONENT

Indicates the principal organ the document is being submitted to or the organ that is issuing the document.

- A/- General Assembly
- S/- Security Council
- E/- Economic and Social Council
- ST/- Secretariat

Some bodies have a special series symbol that does not reflect the parent organ

- CRC/C/- : Committee on the Rights of the Child
- DP/- : United Nations Development Programme
- TD/- : United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- UNEP/- : United Nations Environment Programme

DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: SECOND AND TERTIARY COMPONENTS

Indicates subsidiary bodies:

- -/AC. .../- Ad hoc committee
- -/C. .../-   Standing, permanent, or main committee
- -/CN. .../-   Commission
- -/CONF. .../- Conference
- -/Sub. .../-   Subcommission
- -/WG. .../- Working group
- Etc.

Examples
- A/C.1/-
  General Assembly/First Committee
- E/CN.9-
  ECOSOC/Commission on Population and Development

DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: SPECIAL COMPONENT

Special components reflect the nature of the document:
- **-/L. ...** Limited distribution (generally draft documents)
- **-/PRST/-**   Statements by the President (Security Council, Human Rights Council)
- **-/PV. ...** Verbatim records of meetings
- **-/RES/-**   Resolutions
- **-/SR. ...** Summary records of meetings
- etc.

Examples:

A/C.1/60/PV.1-
- **A/** - General Assembly
- **/C.1/** - First Committee
- **/60/** - 60th session
- **/PV.** – Verbatim Record
- **.1** - First meeting

DOCUMENT SYMBOLS: FINAL COMPONENT

The final component, appearing as a suffix to a symbol, reflects modifications to the original document

- -/Add.   Addendum

- -/Amend.   Alteration, by decision of a competent authority, of a portion of an adopted formal text.

- -/Corr.   Corrigendum (focuses on specific texts in the document)

- -/Rev.   Revision (reproduces the full document with revisions)

MAIN TYPES OF DOCUMENTS

- Reports

- Letters

- Resolutions and Decisions

- Meeting records

- Presidential Statements

Detailed description of the different document types available in the UN Documentation Research Guides
- http://research.un.org/en/docs

RESOLUTIONS

- Formal expressions of the opinion or will of the United Nations organs

  - General Assembly
    - A/RES/session/…
  - Security Council
    - S/RES/…(year)
  - Economic and Social Council (2012-)
    - E/RES/year/…
  - Human Rights Council
    - A/HRC/RES/session/…

- Issued as individual documents

DECISIONS

- Used to designate formal actions, other than resolutions, dealing with non-substantive or routine matters such as:

  - Elections
  - Appointments
  - Time and place of meetings
  - Taking note of reports

- Normally not issued as separate documents

RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS: COMPILATIONS

- The compilation volumes of resolutions and decisions of the principal organs (GA, SC, ECOSOC)

  - Text of resolutions and related information (sponsors, votes)
  - Text of decisions

- Resolutions and decisions of subsidiary bodies usually appear in the report of the body to its parent organ.

More information:
http://research.un.org/en/docs/resolutions

MEETING RECORDS

- Meeting records contain:

  - Statements and speeches
  - Actions taken

- There are two types of meeting records:

  - **Verbatim records**
    - Contains full, first-person account of the proceedings of a meeting:
    - .../PV.-
      - S/PV.5862
      - A/64/PV.101
  - **Summary records**
    - Contains a third-person condensed version of the proceedings of a meeting:
    - .../SR.-
      - A/C.5/62/SR.25
      - E/2010/SR.22

SESSIONAL REPORTS

- Subsidiary bodies submit reports to their parent organ;

- Usually Supplements to the Official Records of the parent organ;

- These reports contain:

  - Resolutions and decisions adopted by the subsidiary body;
  - Summary of the discussions held;
  - May include draft resolutions that the subsidiary body recommends to the parent organ for adoption.

REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- The Secretary-General submits reports to the principal organs on topics mandated by resolutions, such as:

  - Peacekeeping operations;
  - Political situations;
  - Technical subjects;
  - Legal topics, etc.

- No distinguishing symbol element for reports of the Secretary-General.

LETTERS

Letters may come from:
- Member States;
- Secretary-General;
- Presiding officers of UN organs and subsidiaries.

Letters may be addressed to:
- Secretary-General;
- Presiding officers of UN organs and subsidiaries.

Letters may transmit reports, statements or outcome documents of:
- a subsidiary body;
- a regional group meeting;
- another international organization.

SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROCESSING

- The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) receives all official documents to be processed for United Nations meetings through the Documents Management Section (DMS).

- All documents are submitted ONLY by the author departments or the technical secretariats, electronically, through gDoc 2.0.

SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROCESSING

Mode

- MUST be submitted electronically through **gDoc 2.0.** Submissions via e-mail are not accepted.

Format:

- Must be in MS Word version;

- Single-spaced, Times New Roman, 10-point font size (smaller font is permissible in tables and graphics) and correctly paginated;

- Use of tables instead of text boxes;

- Tables, charts and graphs should not be included as images. Should be editable and accompanied by the original files.

- If possible, text should based on the previous official version on ODS and clearly marked-up in track change.

SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROCESSING:
DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

- All draft resolutions must be based on the previous A/RES version on ODS. All changes must be clearly marked-up in track change.

- Minimum processing time for draft resolutions is 48 hours, excluding weekends and official holidays. The 48-hour clock will begin once the document has been received by DMS and does not include the day of submission. Depending on the size and complexity, the processing time may increase up to 96 hours.

- All requests for Reissuance, Revisions or Corrigendum should be cleared by the Chief of DMS.

SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROCESSING: *COMMUNICATIONS*

- *"Member States should refrain, to the extent possible, from requesting the circulation of any individual communication as documents of the General Assembly and in lieu thereof, where circulation of such documents is desired, should, as far as possible, request such circulation under the cover of a note verbale in the official languages in which they submit them"* - Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly and para. 30 of Decision 34/401 on the rationalization of the procedures and organization of the General Assembly.

- Scanned copy of the original signed (**PDF version**) as well as the **Microsoft Word** versions should be emailed to SGCentral@un.org for communications to be issued as documents of the General Assembly or ECOSOC.

- Materials that are accessible to the public on websites or through the media, such as statements, press releases, social media and images, should be cited rather than included in the communications.

WHERE CAN I FIND UN DOCUMENTS?

- Official Document System or ODS at http://documents.un.org

  - Repository of Official UN Documents

- eSubsricption and RSS feeds – for a simple and fast alternate way to access the list of documents issued daily at Headquarters, please subscribe at https://esubscription.un.org

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT SYSTEM (ODS)

- **1993 onwards**
  - All UN Documents

- **1946 onwards**
  - Resolutions;
  - Security Council plenary documents;
  - Meeting records of plenary meetings of the General Assembly;
  - Supplements to the General Assembly Official Records.

- **Older documents are being scanned and made available on an ad-hoc basis**

THANK YOU