

April 11, 2001

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: **Agenda and Procedures Committee—Summary Record of Meeting 01/3**

Attached for the information of Executive Directors is the summary record of the March 22, 2001 meeting of the Agenda and Procedures Committee.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:
Department Heads

Summary Record
Agenda and Procedures Committee
Meeting 01/3
March 22, 2001 – 3:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Bernes (Chairman), Mr. Mozhin, Mr. Yoshimura, Mr. Donecker, Mr. Zurbrügg (for Mr. Cippa), Mr. Anjaria (Secretary).

Also present: Mr. Alosaimi, Mr. Bhaskar, Mr. Burnashev, Mr. Daïri, Mr. Fidjestøl, Mr. Ismael, Ms. Jin, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lundsager, Mr. Sakr, Mr. Sugeng, Mr. Vittas, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Yakusha, Mr. Yopez, Mr. Zoccali.

Mr. Bernes thanked Mr. Mozhin for his effective leadership of the committee during his tenure as Chairman. The committee would do well to maintain both the informality of the discussions that Mr. Mozhin had encouraged, and the aim of keeping meetings to about an hour whenever possible.

1. Term of Membership on the Agenda and Procedures Committee

The Secretary recalled that the APC had initially been established as a small informal working group whose expected heavy work load was to be shared among Directors through a relatively rapid rotation of the group's membership. The group had been made a formal standing committee in December 2000, and in keeping with practice, its membership had continued to rotate on a quarterly basis—most recently in March 2001. At the time of that reconstitution, however, the issue of the precise term of office had deliberately been left open for the Committee to consider. In the present circumstances, three options concerning the period of membership seemed worth examining: (i) retain the practice of rotating the membership on a quarterly basis; (ii) maintain the present composition of the committee until the next reconstitution of all standing committees, in November 2002, and thereafter reconstitute the committee on the same schedule as the other standing committees; and (iii) as a possible intermediate solution, keep the current membership in place for ten months, or roughly half of the time remaining until the regular reconstitution cycle beginning in November 2002.

Directors considered that there was no longer any rationale for treating the APC differently from the other standing committees; all the APC's meetings were open to all Directors and the committee's work load looked more manageable. In addition, it was helpful to provide for continuity in the APC's membership, as in the other committees. Accordingly, most Directors said, the second option was preferable. The Chairman asked the Secretary to prepare a short note (attached), to be circulated to all Directors, reviewing the reconstitution issue and mentioning the second and third options. The note could suggest that, unless Directors wished to continue the discussion, the issue could be resolved by agreeing to proceed on the basis of one of those options.

2. Status of the Calendar in the Period through the Spring IMFC Meeting

The Secretary said that he continued to encourage departments to plan their Board-related activities in a longer time frame, and the latest updating of the calendar of Board meetings went through mid-May. Every effort was being made to keep the Board's calendar manageable while proposing meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays only when there was no alternative.

The Secretary remarked that the Board's calendar through the spring IMFC meeting appeared heavy but manageable. Several changes involving major policy items should be noted. The Board discussion on two papers—relative to the treatment of the claims of private and official bilateral creditors, and capital market access for countries recovering from crises—had been delayed until after the spring meetings, as the staff concerned had been pulled away to work on Argentina and Turkey. A progress report on involving the private sector in the resolution of crises that would be discussed by the Board on April 12 would provide the basis for the discussion on that topic in the IMFC. In addition, the Board discussion on misreporting in the HIPC cases would also have to be delayed until after the spring meetings, owing in part to delays in the joint work with the World Bank in that area. Work on a joint Fund/Bank paper on trade issues had been delayed, and a Board discussion on market access to developing countries' exports would have to wait until after the spring meetings; meanwhile, a short analytical text based on the work done so far would be included in joint report by the Managing Director and the President of the World Bank to the IMFC and the Development Committee on strengthening growth and fighting poverty, which was scheduled for Board discussion on April 10.

A few speakers expressed concern about the apparent intention to circulate reports to the IMFC on issues that had not been discussed by the Board. The Secretary explained that there was no intention to report to the IMFC on substantive issues that had not been discussed by the Board. The report by the Managing Director on involvement by the private sector was intended to provide a reference point for possible comments by IMFC members at the coming meeting; it would not attempt to draw any final conclusions. The question of the reporting to the IMFC could be considered further on the occasion of the Board discussion on March 30 on the draft agenda for the spring IMFC meeting.

3. Circulation and Discussion of the Draft Agenda for the Spring IMFC Meeting

In response to a question by the Chairman, the Secretary noted that the draft agenda for the spring IMFC meeting had been circulated approximately two weeks prior to the March 30 Board meeting, compared with three to seven days in recent years. The Chairman noted that, on the basis of the reactions of the committee members, this appeared generally satisfactory. One speaker considered that an even earlier circulation would be welcome.

4. Next Meeting of the Committee

The Committee agreed to meet again in April to discuss the experience with the models A/B approach to Article IV consultations—on the basis of the list of questions distributed by the Secretary at the previous meeting of the committee—as well as access of Directors to verbatim transcripts of Board meetings, and the possibility of distributing written staff statements after informal meetings on country matters involving information on important program negotiations.

The meeting concluded at 4:00 p.m.



Office Memorandum

To: Executive Directors

April 9, 2001

From: The Secretary

Subject: **Term of Membership on the Agenda and Procedures Committee**

As Executive Directors are aware, the Agenda and Procedures Committee met on March 22, 2001 and considered, inter alia, the issue of the length of the term of service on the Agenda and Procedures Committee. This note provides background for consideration of this issue and sets forth possible courses of action.

By way of background, the idea of an informal working group of Directors to consider how to achieve smoother planning and implementation of the Board's work emerged from a retreat of Executive Directors in early 1999. The expectation was that the working group would meet frequently and have a sizable work load, which it was agreed to share broadly among a number of Directors, each serving for a relatively short term—usually three months.

The informal working group was transformed into a formal Board standing committee last December, and it was last reconstituted in March, when the Board approved the presently constituted committee without specifying term limits, as it was understood that Executive Directors would wish to revert to this issue informally.

At the APC meeting on March 22, there was broad agreement that henceforth the term of membership of the chairman and members should approximate more closely the standard practice for most other committees.¹

In brief, the Executive Board's approval of the APC without reference to a term of membership means that no further action will be required if there is general support for the proposition that the committee should only be reconstituted simultaneously with other standing committees following the next regular election of Executive Directors at the 2002 Annual Meetings. Alternatively, Directors may wish to consider the merits of reconstituting the committee once, or perhaps twice, prior to that election.

¹ Of the other eight standing committees presently in existence, seven are reconstituted following each regular election of Executive Directors, while the membership of the Committee on the Budget rotates every year.

In light of the above background, Executive Directors are requested to contact Mr. Bernes, Chairman of the Agenda and Procedures Committee, or myself, by e-mail or telephone **by cob, Monday, April 23, 2001**, if they feel that this issue warrants further reflection and consideration either at the APC or by Executive Directors informally, for example, at one of the Secretary's breakfasts. If no such request is received by the time specified, it will be understood that Executive Directors see no pressing reasons for further action on this issue for the time being. In that case, the composition of the APC as specified in EBD/01/27 (3/8/01) will remain unchanged until the next normal period for reconsideration of the composition of Board standing committees following the regular election of Executive Directors at the 2002 Annual Meetings.