

United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/304 “Towards torture-free trade: examining the feasibility, scope and parameters for possible common international standards”

Methods of work

1. At its first meeting, held on 12 and 13 October 2021, the Group of Governmental Experts (hereinafter “the Group”), adopted its working methods.

I. Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Rapporteur

2. The Group shall elect a Chairperson, a Vice chairperson, and a Rapporteur, taking due account of the regional representation and gender balance.

3. The Chairperson or Vice Chairperson shall represent the Group if and when required. The Chairperson or Vice Chairperson may decide to delegate this task to other members of the Group, following consultations with all other members of the Group. The Chairperson, or in his/her absence the Vice Chairperson, shall chair the meetings of the Group.

4. The Rapporteur will be responsible for the preparation of the report to the General Assembly, in consultation with all members of the Group. The report will be adopted by the Group, in accordance with paragraph 13 below.

II. Meetings

5. The Group shall meet three or more times, for at least two working days per session. Such meetings may be held in private or be open to the public. The Group decides, for each of its meetings, the specific modalities of its upcoming meetings.

6. During and between sessions, the experts shall discuss and agree on the dates for the future meetings, the respective topics that will be discussed and the external experts they would like to invite, if any.

III. Consultations with stakeholders

7. Pursuant to GA resolution 73/304 that encourages relevant initiatives, including those of the United Nations, to enhance cooperation and improve information exchange and transparency in the field of trade in goods used for (a) capital punishment, (b) torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Group will seek to inform itself and may coordinate with other international, regional and national human rights and trade in goods organisations and institutions, in particular the relevant treaty bodies and the work of the Special Procedures mandate holders.

8. The Group may also organize and/or participate in consultations deemed necessary for the successful implementation of the mandate of the Group, including consultations with Member States, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, United Nations entities, regional organizations, academic institutions and experts in international trade, as relevant and appropriate.

IV. Individual activities

9. All activities conducted by the individual members of the Group that have a connection with the mandate of the Group will be covered by the present methods of work and should be reported back to the Group.

10. Individual activities related to this mandate must be consistent with GA resolution 73/304, and discussed with the Chairperson and OHCHR. Members may not make commitments or decisions on behalf of the Group or OHCHR unless specifically authorized by the Group. Nothing in this rule shall restrict any of the already existing powers of the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson.

11. Members will avoid any type of actual or potential conflict of interest while engaging in individual activities.

VI. Consideration of information

12. The Group shall actively seek information related to its mandate. Information received from relevant stakeholders will be used, as appropriate, by the Group to inform its work.

VII. Decision-making

13. The Group shall endeavour to reach all of its decisions by consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, decisions of the Group shall be put to a vote and adopted on the basis of a simple majority of votes from the experts present and voting. Dissenting opinions may be reflected in reports, if the dissenting expert so wishes.