

ANNEX D: Conflict Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure¹

Conflict can arise in any organisation. It can be an isolated disagreement, a breach of the W20 Code of Ethics or a difficult relationship. Interpersonal tension can damage relationships and lead to wider discord which has a negative effect on performance and the well-being of individuals, if not addressed. W20's approach to dispute resolution is to intervene early and support all parties involved and prevent views becoming entrenched and the escalation of the dispute. In accordance with best practice all parties to the dispute will be encouraged to resolve the matter amongst themselves in the first instance with mediation only required if these initial discussions fail to resolve the matter.

Prevention:

W20 will follow best recruitment practices across the sectors – business, industry, public, academia, charity – when recruiting delegates to ensure that the working environment allows delegates to work together, sharing their knowledge and experience and to respectfully challenge and discuss differences in a positive way. To build the foundations for a strong delegation and good working relations, the recruitment process for each delegation should ensure that delegates are recruited with the necessary skills and experience to fulfil the requirements of the role representing Women20. To further good working relations, delegates should be inducted and fully understand how W20 operates.

If a dispute arises within a delegation or between members of different delegations about the validity or propriety of anything done by delegates or there is a breakdown in working relations, under W20 Governance arrangements an internal mediation process will be used in good faith to overcome heightened tensions and resolve differences by finding solutions that both sides consider fair. Mediation will be used to:

- allow disputes to be resolved internally by a process intended to be fair to all parties,
- ensure natural justice is accorded to the parties throughout the mediation process,
- explore all parties' issues and concerns,
- give each party an opportunity to be heard,
- encourage open communication and establish workable future relationships,
- help individuals to develop skills to resolve difficulties that may arise in the future,
- demonstrate that disputes have been handled appropriately.

The purpose of the mediation process is to guide all parties involved to a mutually acceptable outcome. Mediation will be conducted in a safe confidential space. The process will involve gathering the facts to understand the issue at the heart of the dispute and for all parties to the dispute to have the opportunity to explain the breakdown in relations or difference from their perspective.

It is expected that W20 and all parties to a dispute will in good faith try to settle the dispute through internal mediation. W20 may seek professional legal or other advice at any point during the process.

¹ Approved during the South African Presidency on 12/18/2025

Disputes within W20 will be resolved in accordance with the following principles:

- disputes are conducted respectfully and courteously and notice of any potential dispute will be given to the other party
- all parties in a dispute are given a fair hearing
- if one party considers there is a dispute then there is a dispute
- presentations and documents are clear and focused on the dispute
- all relevant W20 governance documents will be considered when determining the resolution
- damage to W20's reputation is minimised, observing strict confidentiality where necessary
- disputes will be resolved internally.

Dispute Arising in a Delegation

Where the dispute involves members of the same delegation it will be the responsibility of the Head of Delegation to establish the facts and meet with the delegates to facilitate and settle the dispute.

Where a resolution cannot be found at Member level the Presidency will be approached to provide independent facilitation support. In the event that the Presidency cannot reach a resolution, the Presidency may call upon the Troika – the chairs for the past, present and future presidencies. Any member of the Presidency or Troika involved in or connected with the dispute will be excluded from the process.

The Presidency will decide on the process to be followed and has the option to establish an *ad-hoc* committee from within the W20 community to assist with the investigation and gather the facts. The *Ad-Hoc* Committee will make recommendations for resolution to the Presidency. To keep the process internal, it is possible to call upon W20 delegates who may have relevant skills and experience such as mediation or legal backgrounds which will be helpful to resolve the dispute.

Disputes Involving More than One Delegation

Where a dispute involves members of different delegations it will be the responsibility of the Heads of Delegation, if not directly involved in the dispute, to meet with delegates to facilitate and settle the dispute.

Where the dispute cannot be resolved at the Member level, it will be the responsibility of the Presidency (in consultation with the Heads of Delegation if they are not party to the dispute) to provide independent facilitation support to settle the dispute and also may call upon the Troika. Any member of the Presidency or Troika involved in or connected with the dispute will be excluded from the process. The Presidency will decide on the process to be followed and has the option to establish an *ad-hoc* committee from within the W20 community to assist with the investigation and gather the facts. The *Ad-Hoc* Committee will make recommendations for resolution to the Presidency. To keep the process internal, it is possible to call upon W20 delegates who may have relevant skills and experience such as mediation or legal backgrounds which will be helpful to resolve the dispute.

Convening Meetings

Any meeting or mediation session required by this procedure may be conducted in person or remotely by electronic means as agreed to by the parties and (where relevant) the mediator. (Parties to a dispute may be accompanied to a mediation meeting by a delegate from within the W20 community.)

Unresolved Dispute

If having exhausted all potential remedies outlined above, it becomes clear that one or both parties feel the issue cannot be resolved and/or the relationship is beyond repair, the W20 Presidency has the authority to decide to end the delegate(s) continued participation in the W20. As an alternative to ending delegate(s) participation in the W20 the Presidency has the discretion to decide to offer a 'cooling off' period where a delegate(s) is suspended for a period of up to one year and must reapply to the current W20 Presidency and their delegation for a decision to be made on whether they should be allowed to return to W20.