

EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL FOR EOUs & SEZs

EPC/SEZ/AM18/F-4

10th March 2025

AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNING OF EPCES 3rd MEETING FOR THE YEAR 2024-2025) TO BE HELD AT 12:00 PM ON TUESDAY 18th MARCH 2025 THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCING.

CGC meeting (3rd for the year 2024 – 2025) is called through video conferencing on 18th March 2025.

The agenda for this meeting is as under: -

Agenda No.1 Confirmation of minutes of 2nd meeting of Central Governing Council of EPCES held on 02.01.2025 at New Delhi through video conferencing.

The minutes of 2nd meeting of the CGC held on 02.01.2025 are at **Annexure I**. The minutes were circulated to all the CGC members on 02.01.2025

CGC may kindly consider and approve the same.

Agenda No.2. Approval for elections to the Central and Regional Governing Councils and Vice Chairman, EPCES and Regional Vice Chairmen

Elections to the Central and Regional Governing Councils, Vice Chairman, EPCES and Regional Vice Chairmen were held in 2021. The two-year term was to end in 2023. However, the elections were put on hold in view of D/o Commerce OMs dated 10.5.2023 and 27.06.2023 pending finalization of revised Articles of Association / Bye Laws of EPCs.

The revised Model AoA/Bye laws were circulated by the D/o Commerce vide their letter no 13/3/2023-E&MDA-DoC (Part (I)) dated 25.7.2024. EPCES took up with DoC some minor changes vis-à-vis the revised Model AoA relating specifically to EPCES. The same were approved by the D/o Commerce vide their letter no 13/3/2023-E&MDA-DoC (Part 2) dated 17.12.2024.

The revised AoA of the EPCES have been approved and adopted by the CGC and the EGM in the meetings held on 2.1.2025 (**Annexure I**) and 24.2.2025 (**Annexure II** and copy at Annexure II for EGM Minutes), respectively.

As per Art 24.6 (a) of the approved AoA, one third of the elected members shall retire annually, but shall be eligible for re-election as per laid down procedure. As per Art 24.6(b), for the purpose of (a), the names of the members who shall retire, shall be determined by lots/in accordance with seniority (long serving members of Governing Council will retire first)

It is to be noted that in 2014, 2016, 2019 and 2021, elections were held to all members of the CGC.

CGC may kindly consider and approve holding of elections to the Central and Regional Governing Councils, Vice Chairman, EPCES and Regional Vice Chairmen as per the list of vacancies and the draft schedule at **Annexure III** and **Annexure IV**, respectively. The schedule may be revised in consultation with and as per the convenience of the Development Commissioners. The Secretariat will take further necessary action as per AoA and Government instructions.

Agenda Point No. 3: Any other point with the permission of the Chair.

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Revised Articles of Association
For
Export Promotion Council for Export Oriented Units and SEZs

Article 1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

1.1. Definitions:

In these Articles, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) "Act" means the Companies Act, 2013 or Societies Registration Act, 1860, or any other Act including¹ the rules and regulations, subsequent amendment, modification or re-enactment under which the Council is registered;
- (b) "Article" means an article forming part of these Articles;
- (c) "Auditors" means persons appointed, as such, for the time-being, by the Council;
- (d) "Chairperson" means the Chairperson of the Council;
- (e) "Council" means the Export Promotion Council for Export Oriented Units and Special Economic Zones (EPCES);
- (f) "Development Commissioner" means Development Commissioner of the Zone having jurisdiction over the area where the SEZ/EOU is located;
- (g) "Director General" means the Director General (DG) of the Council and includes any officer of the Council performing secretarial functions;
- (h) "Export Promotion Council" means organizations of exporters, set up with the objective to promote and develop Indian exports. Each Council is responsible for promotion of a particular group of products/ projects/services as given in Appendix 2T of ANF;
- (i) "Executive Director" means the Executive Director (ED) of the Council and includes any officer of the Council performing secretarial functions;
- (j) "Extraordinary general meeting" means an extra-ordinary general meeting of the members of the Council other than its Annual General Meeting (AGM) referred to in Article 31.2;
- (k) "General meeting" means a general meeting of the members of the Council;
- (l) "Governing Council" means the Governing Council of the Council, constituted, as such, under these Articles;
- (m) "Member" means a member of the Council;
- (n) "MSME" means micro, small and medium enterprise as defined in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006 including its subsequent amendment, modification, re-enactment, or successor;
- (o) "Office" means the registered office for the time being, of the Council;
- (p) "Panel" means a panel of the Council, wherever constituted under these Articles;
- (q) "Prescribed" means prescribed by the Governing Council; by virtue of a power conferred by these Articles;
- (r) "Product" means any goods or services in regard to which the Council has been recognized for the time being by the Central Government; under the relevant

¹ The definition also includes guidelines, notifications and exceptions issued by the relevant ministry/department from time to time.

- provisions of the Export-Import policy of the Central Government; as in force for the time being;
- (s) "Regional Governing Council" means a Regional Governing Council constituted under these Articles;
 - (t) "Regional Chairperson" means a Regional Chairperson holding office under these Articles;
 - (u) "Rules" means the rules of the Council for the time being in force, made under these Articles or under any enactment for the time being in force;
 - (v) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Council and includes any officer of the Council performing secretarial functions;
 - (w) **Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and Export Oriented Unit (EOU) shall refer to and mean as provided in the Foreign Trade Policy and /or the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005/ Special Economic Zones Rules, 2006 as amended from time to time.**
 - (x) "Startup" means an entity as defined under G.S.R 127(E) issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade) or its subsequent amendment, modification, re-enactment or successor(s) policies;
 - (y) "Vice-Chairperson" means Vice-Chairperson of the Council.

1.2. Certificate

For the purpose of determining whether an industry is a Micro, Small or Medium Enterprises, the MSME certificate issued by the Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises shall be conclusive. For a startup, the certificate issued by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) shall be conclusive.

1.3. Words Defined in the Companies Act, 2013/Societies Registration Act, 1860

Words and expressions used and not defined in these Articles, but defined in the Companies Act, 2013/Societies Registration Act, 1860 have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Acts.

1.4. General Clauses Act to Apply

The General Clauses Act, 1897 applies for the interpretation of these Articles as it applies for the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.

1.5. Repugnancy

Where, in relation to a Council to which an Act applies, there is a repugnancy between the provisions of these Articles and the provisions of that Act, the provisions of that Act shall to the extent of the repugnancy overrule the provisions of these Articles.

Article 2. ARTICLES SUBJECT TO FOREIGN TRADE POLICY

The provisions of these Articles shall be subject to those of the Foreign Trade Policy under ITC(HS) Classification/Central Product Classification (CPC) and Handbook of Procedures,

as notified by the Central Government from time to time.

Article 3. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERS AND ELIGIBILITY OF MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Categories of members of the Council

The Council shall have the following categories of members, namely:

- (a) Ordinary members.
- (b) Co-opted members
- (c) Institutional members

3.2 Ordinary Member

Any Export Oriented Unit, SEZ Unit, SEZ Developer/co-developer, to whom Letter of Approval/Letter of Permission has been issued by the Board of Approval/ Development Commissioner/ Unit Approval Committee, will be eligible for membership of the Council.

3.3 Co-opted Member

There shall be coopted members, not exceeding 10, who shall be so nominated by the Central/State Governments. The said Coopted members shall be nominated in the Governing Council and shall have no voting rights.

3.4 Institutional Members

Central or State Government Undertakings /Central or State Government Organisations dealing in exports or any other financial institution linked to exports, on one-time payment of Rs 50,000, are eligible for membership. Institutional Members may participate in the General Body meetings but shall have no voting rights.

Article 4. ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTIONS

4.1. Right to Vote

Ordinary members shall have the right to vote.

4.2 Eligibility to Contest in Elections

- (a) Only an Ordinary Member shall be eligible as a candidate for elections to various positions in the Council.
- (b) In case of EOU or SEZ unit, the person or the entity represented by the person must have to its credit during the two financial years immediately preceding the election, the average annual exports of not less than the amount mentioned below:
 - (i) Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSMEs): Rs.50 Lakh - Rs.2.5 Crore (Micro Enterprises- Rs. 50 Lakhs, Small Enterprises -Rs. 1 crore and Medium Enterprises- Rs. 2.5 crore) Others: Above Rs.2.5 Crore.
 - (ii) in case of SEZ Developer/co-developer, the investment made by SEZ Developer/co- developer is equal to or more than Rs. 50 crores, including investment made in land.

- (c) If applicable, where a person is contesting for election as Regional Chairperson,
- (i) in case of EOU or SEZ unit, the person or the entity represented by the person must have minimum annual average exports of Rs. 2.5 crores of the product, or such higher limit as may be prescribed by the Council.
 - (ii) in case of SEZ Developer/Co-developer, the investment made by SEZ Developer/co-developer is equal to or more than Rs. 50 crores, including investment made in land.
- (d) Where a Governing Council member is contesting for election as Chairperson or Vice- Chairperson,
- (i) In case of EOU or SEZ unit, the person or the entity represented by the person must have minimum annual average exports of Rs. 5 crores to its credit during the two financial years immediately preceding the election.
 - (ii) In case of SEZ Developer/Co-developer, the investment made by SEZ Developer/co-developer is equal to or more than Rs. 50 crores, including investment made in land.
- (e) A certificate issued by a Chartered Accountant shall be required for the purposes of paragraph (b), (c) and (d) of this Article.

Article 5. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Form of application

Online Application for membership of the Council as a member shall be made to the Council in the prescribed application form on a common digital platform of DGFT (URL: <https://www.dgft.gov.in/CP/?opt=e-rcmc>).

2.2 Accompaniments

The application for membership shall be sent to the Council, along with requisite documents which may include the following:

- (a) a copy of the active IEC number by the applicant;
- (b) a copy of the valid Letter of Approval/Letter of Permission
- (c) a certificate of financial soundness from the applicant's bankers;
- (d) proof of payment of the prescribed fee which, along with any other payments to the Council, shall be through online mode only, as per Income- tax Rules, 1962; and
- (e) name and contact details of person representing the organisation.

2.3 Decision on the application

- (a) The Governing Council or any authority designated by the Governing Council shall take a decision on the application for membership within 45 days from the receipt of a properly completed application, and the Governing Council's decision shall be final.
- (b) In case, a decision is taken by a designated authority, the same shall be ratified by the Governing Council in its first subsequent meeting.
- (c) The decision of the Governing Council whether of acceptance or rejection of the application, shall be communicated to the applicant along with reasons, in writing.

2.4 Commencement of membership

Where the application for membership is accepted by the Governing Council, the membership of the applicant shall commence from the beginning of the financial year during which the application is accepted.

Article 6. FEES FOR MEMBERSHIP

(a) Members (other than nominated, co-opted and institutional members), shall pay such entrance fee and annual fee and any other fee as may be prescribed by the Governing Council.

(b) The Council may grant a concession in entrance / annual fee for members such as women entrepreneurs, startups, young entrepreneurs (less than 40 years of age as on 31st March of the year of election), or North Eastern/Hill Regions.

Article 7. RESIGNATION BY MEMBERS

(a) A member of the Council may resign by giving to the DG/ED/Secretary a notice in writing of their intention to do so and shall thereupon cease to be a member either immediately or from such date as may be mentioned in the notice in this regard.

(b) A member who has resigned shall nevertheless continue to be liable to the Council for all amounts due from that member to the Council and for any other liability, which the member might have incurred towards the Council.

(c) Entrance fee/Annual fee once paid shall not be refunded on resignation.

Article 8. DISQUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL

8.1 Disqualification

(a) A person shall be disqualified for being, or for continuing as a member of the Council, if:

(i) found to be of unsound mind by a competent court;

(ii) adjudicated as, or applies to be adjudicated as, an insolvent;

(iii) convicted by a court of an offence involving moral turpitude and sentenced in respect thereof to imprisonment for not less than six months;

(iv) they or any firm in which they are a partner or any company of which they are a Director, commits a violation of relevant sections of the Act;

(v) they become disqualified by an order of the court or tribunal under relevant sections of the Act;

(vi) they cease to be a member of the entity which they represent, or such entity ceases to be a member of the Council;

(vii) their name is removed from the Register of Members under Article 8.2; or

(viii) convicted of the offence dealing with related party transactions under the relevant sections of the Act; at any time during the last preceding five years.

(ix) the entity is de-bonded in the SEZ/EOU in which it exists or if the entity

otherwise becomes ineligible to continue under the SEZ/EOU Scheme.

- (b) A person shall be disqualified from reapplying for membership, if:
- (i) a period of five years has not elapsed from the date of expiry of the sentence;
 - (ii) they have been convicted of any offence and have served a period of seven years or more.

8.2 Removal by the Governing Council

The Governing Council or any other Committees designated by the Council may, after giving a member reasonable opportunity of being heard, remove the name of that member from the Register of Members, either for a specified period or indefinitely, if the Member:

- (a) has violated any condition for membership; or
- (b) has been in arrears in regard to the payment of membership fee or of any other amounts due from the member to the Council for more than six months; or
- (c) has been found guilty of disorderly conduct at meetings of the Council or of the Governing Council; or
- (d) has been found guilty of conduct unbecoming of a member; or
- (e) has become disqualified under Article 8.1.

Article 9. CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

Article 9.1 Method of conducting election:

In order to make the Council participative in nature and for better governance and transparency, the Council, as registering authority, shall adhere to the following criteria for conducting elections:

- (a) Election of the Governing Council and also for the post of Vice-Chairperson/Chairperson of the Governing Council shall be conducted through e-voting, as provided for in the relevant Act or the Foreign Trade Policy.
- (b) A reputed agency may be appointed by the Council to conduct the election in a free and fair manner.²
- (c) Observer(s) for the election(s) for the post of Governing Council and for Vice-Chairperson/Chairperson will be deputed by the Government from the Department of Commerce, DGFT or any other Ministry/ Department/Organisation as may be decided by the Government.
- (d) The Governing Council shall appoint one or more scrutiniser, who may be Chartered Accountant in practice, Cost Accountant in practice, or Company Secretary in practice or an Advocate, or any other person who is not in employment of the Council and is a person of repute who, in the opinion of the Governing Council members can scrutinise the voting and remote e-voting process in a fair and transparent manner.
- (e) The provisions under this article shall be subject to the provisions of the relevant Act, Rules, Regulations, Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) and instructions, guidelines, advisories issued by Government of India from time to time.

² For the purposes of this paragraph 'agency' means the National Securities Depository Limited, the Central Depository Services (India) Limited or any other entity approved by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs

9.2. Duty of Council

- (a) It shall be the responsibility of the Council to ensure that elections to various posts in the Councils are held timely in a free and fair manner and as prescribed under Article 9.
- (b) Elected members shall automatically retire on completion of their tenure.

9.3 Failure to hold elections

If a Council fails to ensure timely elections as provided in Article 9, the Central Government may after giving it a reasonable opportunity of being heard, direct the Governing Council to hold a fresh election and may make such interim arrangements as may be necessary for that purpose.

9.4 Mode of conducting elections

The following matters shall be provided for by rules to be made by the Council namely:

- a) The tenure of members elected to various posts in the Council except as otherwise provided in these Articles;
- b) Mode of conducting elections except as otherwise provided in these Articles.

Article 10. REPRESENTATION OF FIRMS

- (a) Any firm, which is a member of this Council, shall by consent of all partners authorize any one of its partners to act as its representative at any meeting of the Council or of the Governing Council.
- (b) In the absence of any such authority in the case of any firm, any one partner whose name has been registered in the records of the Council shall be entitled to act as a representative of the firm at any meeting of the Council or of the Governing Council.
- (c) Any company (including Public, Private, LLP, Section 8, Non-profit company) or cooperative society or other corporation which is a valid member of this Council may authorize any of its directors to act as their representative at any meeting and election of the Council or Governing Council, provided he/she is authorized by a Board Resolution of their Company. Valid members whose turnover is Rs. 200 Crores or more (in the preceding financial year) may be permitted to nominate, any of its Senior Management personnel, as defined in the Companies Act 2013, dealing with the SEZ/EOU/exports matters of the said member company or society, who may be duly authorized by way of a board resolution to act as their representative at any meeting and elections of the Council or Governing Council, except for the post of Vice Chairperson/Chairperson
- (d) A sole proprietary firm or Hindu Undivided Family firm shall be represented by its proprietor or Karta as the case may be.
- (e) A person authorized to represent an entity by or under clause (a), (b) (c) or (d) of this Article shall thereupon be entitled to exercise the same rights and powers

on behalf of the member whom the person represents, as if it were an individual member of the Council, of the same class as the firm, company, society, or other corporation, as the case may be.

- (f) Any authority granted under clause (a) or (c) of this article shall be effective, only on expiry of seven days from the date on which it is lodged with the Council.

11. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

11.1 Ordinary Members

Without prejudice to any other rights conferred on Ordinary Members by the Memorandum of Association of the Council, but subject to the other provisions of these Articles, Ordinary Members shall have the following rights and privileges, namely:

- (a) right to stand as a candidate, and to vote at the election of the members of the Governing Council and the right to vote on all matters brought before a meeting of the Council, provided there are no arrears of subscription or other dues or charges payable by them to the Council on 30th June in the year of voting;
- (b) right to requisition a meeting as provided for in these Articles;
- (c) right to receive the annual reports of the Governing Council, on payment of the prescribed fee;
- (d) right to receive publications of the Council, on the conditions prescribed by the respective Councils; and
- (e) right to use all such facilities as may be made available to such members by the Council from time to time on the conditions prescribed by the respective Councils.

11.2 Co-opted members and Institutional Members

A co-opted/ institutional member shall have no right to vote.

Article 12. VOTING

12.1 Persons Who Can Vote

- (a) Ordinary Members or their authorized representatives, shall alone be entitled to vote at general meetings, including annual general meetings and extra-ordinary general meetings, of the Council.
- (b) Every such member shall have only one vote.
- (c) The Chairperson shall have, in addition, a casting vote.

12.2. Validity of Vote(s)

- (a) No objection shall be taken to the validity of any vote cast at a meeting, except at the meeting at which such vote was tendered and every vote not disallowed at such meeting shall be deemed to be valid for all the purposes of such meeting.
- (b) The Chairperson of a meeting shall be the sole judge of the validity of every vote tendered at such meeting.

Article 13. SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES

If a Member fails to pay the annual subscription by the 30th June of every year for which it has become due then:

- a) the member shall not be entitled to exercise any right or privilege as such Member and
- b) the Governing Council may suspend the membership, and such suspension shall remain operative until the member pays the arrears and the Governing Council accepts in writing such arrears and restores the membership after revoking the suspension.

Article 14. CHANGE IN INTERNAL CONSTITUTION TO BE REPORTED

Where there is a change in the constitution of an entity which is a member of the Council or a change in its authorized business activities, the change should be reported by the entity to the Governing Council within three months.

Article 15. REGISTER OF MEMBERS

The Council shall keep a Register of Members (Ordinary, Co-opted, Nominated and Institutional) which will contain the following particulars of its members, namely:

- (a) the name, email address, postal address and occupation of the member;
- (b) registered office address, contact details, IEC/PAN/GST/TIN/CIN/DIN of the member applying, as applicable;
- (c) the class of membership of such member, if any;
- (d) the date on which each member was entered in the register; and
- (e) the date on which the person ceases to be a member.

Article 16. GOVERNING COUNCIL

- a) The Council shall have a Governing Council to perform the functions assigned to it by these Articles.
- b) The composition of the Governing Council shall be as provided in Article 24.

Article 17. DISQUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

- a) A person shall be disqualified for being, or for continuing as, a Member of the Governing Council, if they become subject to any of the disqualification enumerated in Article 8.1 in regard to the membership of the Council.
- b) Before declaring a Member to be disqualified, the Governing Council shall give them a reasonable opportunity of being heard and shall follow such procedure as may be prescribed.

Article 18. VACANCIES

18.1 Casual Vacancies

- (a) If there arises a casual vacancy in the office of any member of the Governing Council (other than members who are nominated or co-opted) it shall be filled up by the Governing Council and shall be subject to approval by members in the next general meeting. Provided that when the vacancy is for a period not exceeding two months, the Governing Council may decide not to fill up the vacancy, so long as the number of vacancies so left unfilled does not exceed three.
- (b) A person appointed to fill up a casual vacancy shall hold office only for the remainder of the term of the original member.

18.2 Overseas Visits

If the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson desires to go out of India, they shall intimate to the DG/ED/ Secretary the date of their expected return to India.

Article 19. REGIONAL CHAIRPERSON

- (a) As applicable, there may be Regional Chairperson(s). They shall be ex-officio member(s) of the Governing Council.
- (b) There may be more than one Regional Chairperson as per the functional requirement of the Council.
- (c) Their election shall be held along with elections to the Governing Council and shall be regulated by rules to be made by the Governing Council.

Article 20. FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

20.1 The Functions of the Governing Council

Functions of the Governing Council shall be as follows:

- (a) to administer the general affairs of the Council;
- (b) to determine what work shall be undertaken by the Council and to arrange for the conduct of such work;
- (c) to receive and deal with reports and recommendations of various Sub Committee(s) (where such Committee(s) has/ have been constituted);
- (d) to arrange for the publication of reports and other documents issued by the Council;
- (e) to collaborate in related activities with other Export Promotion Councils in India and similar bodies in foreign countries and with international organization working in the field;
- (f) to control the finances of the Council;
- (g) to control the staff of the Council;
- (h) to take steps to conduct timely elections to various posts contemplated by these rules;
- (i) to make rules from time to time for the proper conduct and management of the

- affairs of the Council including matters which are to be prescribed under these Articles;
- (j) to do all such other lawful acts as would be conducive to the interests of the Council.

Article 21. REGIONAL GOVERNING COUNCILS

21.1 Formation of Regional Governing Council

- a) There shall be a Regional Governing Council for each region.
- b) The geographical extent of such Region shall be co-terminus with the geographical jurisdiction of the Development Commissioner or as determined by the Governing Council.
- c) The Regional Governing Council shall consist of the following:
- i) an elected Regional Chairperson, and
 - ii) a maximum of twenty-eight members elected through Electronic Voting by the members of region, of whom 7 shall be elected from among EOUs, 14 shall be elected from among SEZ units and 7 shall be elected from among SEZ Developers.
 - (iii) The Development Commissioner concerned shall be a Permanent Special Invitee to the Regional Governing Council
- d) The Regional Chairperson shall be elected by the Regional Governing Council from among the Regional Governing Council members for a term of two years in case there is no candidate under clause (f) below and, shall retire accordingly and shall not be eligible for re-election at the immediately next election.
- e) The Regional Vice-Chairperson shall be elected through Electronic Voting for a term of two years by all the members of the region eligible to vote.
- f) On completion of his term of two years, the Regional Vice – Chairperson shall be endorsed by the Regional Governing Council to succeed the Regional Chairperson unless he is unwilling to accept Chairpersonship or he has incurred any of the disqualifications enumerated in Article 8.1 regard to membership of the Council. If the Regional Vice-Chairperson is unwilling or resigns from the post, then shall cease to be member of Regional Governing Council. The Regional Governing Council within 15 days prior to change shall declare the nominations for the said post.
- g) The election of the Regional Chairperson/Regional Vice-Chairperson shall be in the same line as for the Governing Council as per article 9.

21.2 Functions of Regional Governing Council:

- 1) Each such Regional Governing Council shall:
- a) Take steps to stimulate exports from its region, including
 - (i) Providing commercially useful information and assistance to members in

- developing and increasing exports,
 - (ii) Offering professional advice to members in areas such as technology upgradation, quality and design improvement, standards and specifications, product
 - (iii) Organising visits of delegations of members abroad to explore market opportunities,
 - (iv) Organising participation in trade fairs, exhibitions and buyer-seller meets in India and abroad.
 - v) Promoting interaction between the exporting community and Government both at the Central and State levels,
 - (vi) Building a statistical base and provide data on exports and imports and other relevant international trade data, and
 - b) Perform such other functions as the Council may lay down from time to time.
- 2) The Regional Governing Council shall conduct its proceedings in the manner laid down at Article 26.

Article 22. PANELS

- (a) The Governing Council may from time to time constitute panels to perform such functions as the Governing Council may lay down.
- (b) The composition of the Panel may be decided by the Governing Council.

Article 23. SEAL

- (a) The Council shall have a Seal and shall provide for its safe custody;
- (b) The Seal of the Council shall not be affixed to any document except under the general or specific authority of the Governing Council and shall also not be affixed to any instrument except in the presence of two members of the Governing Council or such other persons as the Governing Council may authorize for the purpose. The two members or other persons as authorized by the Governing Council shall sign every legal instrument to which the seal of the Council is so affixed in their presence.

Article 24. COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

24.1 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Governing Council

- (a) The Chairperson shall be elected by the Council or elevated from the position of vice chairperson on being endorsed by the Governing Council. The Chairperson:
 - i. shall hold office for a period of two years and shall retire accordingly;
 - ii. shall not be eligible for re-election at the next election in the same Council;
 - iii. shall be eligible for re-election as Vice-Chairperson/Chairperson as the case may be, in the same Council, only after a cooling off period of not less than four years from the date of demitting/vacating office as the Chairperson³;

³ For example, if the term of Chairperson expires on 31st March 2023, he/she shall be eligible for contesting for election for the post of Chairperson/Vice Chairperson not before 1st April, 2027.

- iv. can be removed by a "No Confidence Vote". Such resolution shall be passed by not less than two third of the Members of the Governing Council. The resolution regarding No Confidence will be put to vote on the same pattern of direct elections as enumerated in Article 9.1.

(b) The Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Council shall be elected by the Council and shall hold office for a term of two years and;

- i. on completion of the term of two years, the Vice-Chairperson shall be endorsed by the Governing Council to succeed the Chairperson on completion of the Chairperson's term, unless the Vice-Chairperson is unwilling to accept Chairpersonship or the Vice-Chairperson has incurred any of the disqualifications enumerated in Article 8.1 regarding membership of the Council;
- ii. in the event of the post of Vice-Chairperson falling vacant due to any of the circumstances, the post shall be filled up as per the procedure laid down;
- iii. shall be eligible for re-election as Vice-Chairperson in the same Council, only after the gap of four years from the date from which the Vice-Chairperson has last held office as a Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson, whichever is later;
- iv. can be removed by a No Confidence Vote. Such resolution shall be passed by not less than two third of the Members of the Governing Council. The resolution regarding No Confidence, shall be put to vote on the same pattern of direct elections as enumerated in Article 9.1.

Notwithstanding the provision mentioned at 24.1(b)(i) above, the Council may also consider direct elections for the post of Chairperson by adopting a resolution with 2/3 majority of the Governing Council.

24.2 Composition of the Governing Council

a) The Governing Council shall be elected by the Council. The Governing Council elected members shall have a maximum of two terms of three years each followed by a cooling off period of two years.

b) The Governing Council shall consist of 55 members:

- i) Seven members to be elected through Electronic Voting among the EOU's (one each from Seven Zones)
- ii) Fourteen members to be elected through Electronic Voting among the SEZ units (two each from Seven Zones)
- iii) Seven members to be elected through Electronic Voting among the SEZ Developers (one each from Seven Zones)
- (iv) Seven Elected Regional Chairpersons
- (v) Seven Development Commissioners (Ex-Officio)*
- (vi) One representative from Ministry of Commerce not below the rank of Deputy Secretary to the Government of India to be nominated as ex-officio member*
- (vii) Two representatives from Ministry of Finance not below the rank of Deputy Secretary or equivalent to Government of India to be nominated as Ex-officio member (One from CBEC & one from CBDT) *
- (viii) 10 Co-opted members as decided by the Central/State Governments*

*With no voting rights

c) Without prejudice to clause 8 of Memorandum of Association, the Governing Council reserves the right to modify the composition of the Governing Council with the prior approval of the Central Government

24.3 Reservation

- a) At least one third of the seats for the elected members of the Governing Council shall be reserved for representatives of MSMEs.
- b) In addition, at least one third of the seats for elected members of the Governing Council shall be reserved for exporters who fall within the category of export houses, trading houses, star-trading houses and entities granted similar status for the purpose of the Foreign Trade Policy that is in force at the time.
- c) At least five seats shall be reserved for categories of women entrepreneurs (minimum one), startups, young entrepreneurs (less than 40 years of age as on 31st March of the year of election); or North Eastern/Hill Regions to ensure their suitable representation in the Governing Council.
- d) For the purposes of reservation as stated in paragraph (c), at least one seat shall be reserved for a woman entrepreneur.
- e) if the categories mentioned in (a), (b) and (c) are represented/elected through either of the above or overlapping categories, this will be sufficient for meeting the requirements mentioned under these provisions.
- f) Where any seat reserved under clause (c) of this Article cannot be filled up by candidates of that reserved category through election process, the Department of Commerce, in consultation with the respective Councils, shall nominate suitable representatives of the respective categories.
- g) The Council shall send a report to the Department of Commerce within 45 days after conclusion of election process.

24.4 Co-opted Members

a) The Governing Council may co-opt such members, as it considers necessary from Central Government/State Government/Banking Institutions/Star Houses etc. for the efficient conduct of its business in relation to specific types of activities.

24.5 Other Provisions for Nominated / Co-opted Members

- (a) The term of office of members of the Governing Council who are nominated by the Central Government shall be co-terminus with the term of the Governing Council. Provided that, if a member is nominated during the term of the Governing Council, its term of office shall be such as the Central Government may specify.
- (b) The Central Government may, at any time, require such a nominee to relinquish its office and may appoint another person in its place.

24.6 Retirement of Elected Members

- a) One third of the elected members shall retire annually, but shall be eligible for re-election, as per laid down procedure.
- b) For the purpose of para (a), the names of the members who shall retire, shall be

determined by lot/in accordance with the seniority (long serving members of Governing Council will retire first).

c) Election process of the retiring members may be started three months before the AGM of that year.

d) There shall be a "cooling off" period of two years after two consecutive terms of the elected member of Governing Council.

e) If a Member gets elected to Vice-Chairperson in their second term of Governing Council and eligible to succeed the post of Chairperson on completion of their Term, they shall be deemed member of the Governing Council during the Member's period as Chairperson of the Council.

Note: The provision under 24.6(d) shall be effective from 01.04.2025 to give sufficient time to the Councils for implementing the revised guidelines.

24.7 Elections of the Governing Council and Returning Officer

(a) Elections to the Governing Council (in respect of seats of elected members falling vacant) shall be conducted annually, well before the expiry of the term of the retiring members.

(b) The Governing Council shall appoint a returning officer for conducting elections.

24.8 Rules

The Governing Council shall make provisions regarding the elections to the offices of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson on matters not provided for, in these Articles/byelaws.

Article 25. CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Chairperson of the Governing Council shall ordinarily be the Chairperson of the Council and shall be responsible for the proper functioning of the Council.

Article 26. VICE-CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

(a) The Vice-Chairperson shall, in the absence of the Chairperson, have the power to perform the duties of the Chairperson.

(b) The Vice-Chairperson shall also perform any other functions that may be entrusted to them by the Chairperson.

Article 27. REMUNERATION

Members of the Governing Council shall not be entitled to any remuneration for attending its meetings or for any other function performed by them as such members.

Article 28. POWERS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

- (a) The Governing Council shall be the Managing Body of the Council and in addition to the powers and authorities conferred by statute or by these Articles, may exercise all such powers and do all such acts and things as shall, by statute or by these Articles be directed or authorized to be done by the Council in a general meeting.
- (b) Such acts of the Governing Council as are not regulated by statute or by these Articles, shall be subject to such regulations or directions as may from time to time be decided upon or given at any annual or extra-ordinary general meeting of the Council.

Provided that no such regulation or direction shall invalidate any prior act of the Governing Council which would have been valid, if the regulation or direction had not been made or given.

Article 29. RESOLUTION BY CIRCULATION

- (a) Any business which may be necessary for the Governing Council to transact may, if the Chairperson so directs, be carried out by circulation of papers through electronic and / or physical means among all its members and any resolution so circulated and approved by the majority of such members shall be effectual and binding as the resolution passed at a meeting of the Governing Council, provided that at least the number of members who constitute the quorum of the Governing Council have recorded their views on the resolution.
- (b) When any business is so referred by circulation to the members of the Governing Council, a period of not less than five working days shall be allowed for the receipt of replies from such members, such period being reckoned from the date on which the notice of the business is issued.
- (c) If a resolution is circulated, the result of the circulation shall be communicated through electronic and / or physical means to all the members of the Governing Council and shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Governing Council.
- (d) All such resolutions / important documents shall be immediately uploaded on the website of the Council.
- (e) Notwithstanding paragraph (d), nothing in this article shall be construed to require the Council to disclose any information which is confidential in nature.

Article 30. DIRECTOR GENERAL (DG), EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (ED), SECRETARY, OFFICERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES

30.1 Director General / Executive Director

- (a) There shall be a Director General (DG) /Executive Director (ED) of the Council, who shall be under the control and direction of the Governing Council.
- (b) They shall be the overall in-charge of the administration of the Council and shall supervise the work of all officers of the Council.
- (c) If required, the Council may have a Secretary who shall work under the

administrative control of the Director General / Executive Director.

30.2 Secretary, if appointed

- (a) The Secretary shall have charge of all correspondence and shall keep an account of the funds of the Council and of funds connected with, or in any way controlled by, the Council.
- (b) The Secretary shall keep the approved minutes of all the meetings of the Council and of the Governing Council.
- (c) The Secretary shall issue the notice of all meetings of the Council and of the Governing Council.
- (d) The Secretary shall duly notify members of their appointment, countersign all cheques signed by the Chairperson or by any member or members of the Governing Council duly authorized in this behalf and shall collect all moneys due to the Council.
- (e) The Secretary shall prepare an Annual Report of the Council.
- (f) The Secretary shall generally perform all such functions as are incidental to their office or as may be assigned to them by the Governing Council or Director General / Executive Director, from time to time.

30.3 Officers

The officers of the Council including the Secretary (if appointed) shall devote themselves entirely to such business and affairs of the Council as may be assigned to them by the competent authority.

30.4 Rules regarding Employees

The Governing Council may, in respect of all employees of the Council, make rules to regulate the following matters namely;

- (a) conditions of service;
- (b) appointment, promotion and dismissal;
- (c) grant of pay, leave, allowances, pensions, gratuities and compassionate allowances; provided that the grant of leave and allowances to Government Servants whose services have been lent or transferred to the Council shall be decided with the prior approval of the competent authority to sanction their transfer to the Council;
- (d) payment of travelling allowances; and
- (e) the establishment and maintenance of a Provident Fund and other funds for the welfare of the employees.

30.5 Internal resources

At least 50 percent of the internal resources of the Council, except those derived from Government grants, shall be utilized for development and export promotion activities including market studies, dissemination of trade information, buyer- seller meets, participation in trade fairs in India and outside India.

Article 31. GENERAL MEETINGS

31.1 General Meetings of the Council

- (a) A general meeting of the Council shall be held within eighteen months of the incorporation of the Council and thereafter at least once in every calendar year on such date, (not being more than fifteen months after the preceding general meeting) and at such places as the Governing Council may consider convenient for the dispatch of business.
- (b) At the general meeting, a report of the activities of the Governing Council for the year under review and the yearly audited accounts including a statement of income and expenditure and a Balance Sheet made until the date not earlier than the date of the meeting by more than six months shall be submitted.
- (c) Such meeting shall be called an Annual General Meeting (AGM) and all other general meetings of the Council shall be called extra-ordinary general meetings (EGM).
- (d) The Governing Council may, whenever it deems fit, call an Extra-ordinary general meeting under sub-section (1) on requisition from not less than one-fifth of the total number of members with voting rights on the said date.
- (e) Such meetings shall be held in the same manner in which the AGM is called and held by the Governing Council.

31.2 Annual General Meeting

- (a) The Council shall hold an Annual General Meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Act.
- (b) The Annual General Meeting shall be held at any time during business hours on a day (not being a public holiday) decided by the Governing Council.
- (c) The notice calling the meeting shall specify it as the Annual General Meeting.

31.3 Business for the Annual General Meetings (AGM)

The business to be transacted at an AGM of the Council shall be:

- (a) to receive and consider the accounts and the report of the Governing Council and the auditors;
- (b) to present output and outcome of the activities of the Council for the preceding year (including a report of the total exports of the product under their basket for the preceding year and targets and objectives of the Council for the subsequent year(s));
- (c) to place on record the names of the Governing Council members; and
- (d) to appoint and fix the remuneration of the auditors.

31.4 Notice of the AGM

- (a) With regard to every AGM of the Council, not less than fourteen clear days' notice to the members, specifying the place, date and time of meeting, shall be given. Agenda of the meeting shall be circulated sufficiently in advance of the meeting.

- (b) A notice may be given to members through electronic and / or physical mode at the registered email / postal address.
- (c) Where a notice is sent by post, the service shall be deemed to have been affected at the expiry of 48 hours after it is posted.
- (d) The non-receipt of any notice of meeting by any member, shall not invalidate any proceedings of any meeting or any resolution passed at any meeting, subject to the condition that such notice was sent / received at the registered postal/email address.

31.5 Requisition for Extra-ordinary General Meeting

- (a) The Governing Council shall call a meeting if so, requested by the members.
- (b) The request referred to in paragraph (a) shall:
 - i. be in writing;
 - ii. set forth the reasons for the meeting; and
 - iii. be signed by one-fifth of all the members having voting rights.
- (c) The Governing Council shall call for a meeting, by sending a notice, within 21 days of the receipt of the request mentioned in paragraph (a).
- (d) The Governing Council shall have the liberty to determine the date and time for the meeting.

31.6 No Right to Remuneration

Members of the Council shall not be entitled to any remuneration for attending its meeting or for performing any other functions as such members.

Article 32. PROCEDURE OF MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

32.1 Quorum

- (a) No business shall be transacted at any general meeting, unless the requisite quorum is present at the commencement of the business.
- (b) The quorum for a general meeting shall be 25 ordinary members of the Council
- (c) The members of the quorum include Ordinary and eligible Associate members of the Council.

32.2 Venue and Mode of Meeting

- (a) Every Annual General Meeting of the Council shall be held in the city in which the registered office of the Council is situated or at any such place as may be decided by the Governing Council.
- (b) The Council can also hold a meeting through hybrid means or video conferencing or other audio-visual means, if permissible under the relevant Act, which are capable of recording and recognizing the participation of the members and of recording and storing the proceedings of such meetings along with date and time.

32.3 Dismissal and Adjournment of a Meeting

- (a) If after the expiration of half an hour from the time appointed for holding an Annual General Meeting of the Council, the quorum is not present then:
 - (i) If the meeting is convened by or upon the requisition of the members it shall stand dissolved;
 - (ii) In any other case the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day after one week (if that day is not a public holiday) at the same time and place or to such other day, time and place (in the same city) as the Governing Council may determine.
- (b) If, in any such adjourned meeting quorum is not present at the expiration of half an hour from the time appointed for holding the meeting then the members present shall constitute the quorum and may transact the business for which the meeting was called.

32.4 Chairperson

- a) Chairperson of the Council shall be entitled to take the chair at every General Meeting of the Council.
- b) if there is no Chairperson or if they are not present within 15 minutes from the time appointed for holding such meeting or if they are unwilling to act then the Vice-Chairperson of the Council, who is present and willing, shall preside.
- c) If the Vice-Chairperson is not present and willing, the members of the Governing Council who are present may, choose one of the members of the Governing Council present in the meeting, to preside over the meeting.
- d) If no Member of the Governing Council is willing to take the chair, the eligible Members of the Council who are present shall elect one of the Ordinary Members to be the Chairperson of the meeting of the Council.

32.5 Voting on Resolution

- (a) At any General Meeting, a resolution put to vote at the meeting shall be decided on a show of hands unless a poll by secret ballot is ordered under clause (b) of this Article.
- (b) A poll by secret ballot (before or on the declaration of the result of voting on any resolution by show of hands)-
 - i. May be ordered to be taken by the Chairperson of the meeting, by their own notion;
 - ii. Shall be ordered by the Chairperson, if it is demanded by at least five members having the right to vote on the resolution and present in person or by their authorized representative.

32.6 Voting by show of hands

At any general meeting, a resolution put to the vote at the meeting shall be decided by a show of hands, unless a poll (before or on the declaration of the result of the show of hands) is demanded by the Chairperson or such members as provided in the relevant section of the Act, and unless a poll is so demanded, a declaration by the Chairperson that the resolution has, on a show of hands, been carried unanimously or by a particular majority, or lost, shall be conclusive and an entry, to that effect, in the books of the

proceedings of the meetings of the Council and signed by the Chairperson shall be conclusive evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favor or against that resolution.

32.7 Minutes of the Meeting

An entry in the Minute Book of the Council in regard to any resolution moved at a meeting shall be conclusive evidence of the fact that the resolution was:

- (a) passed unanimously; or
- (b) adopted by majority; or
- (c) defeated, as the case may be.

Article 33. PROCEEDINGS AT MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

33.1 Business and Quorum

No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Council, unless the quorum laid down in Article 32.1 is present at the commencement of the business and if no such quorum is present within half an hour of the meeting, then the provisions of Article 32.3 shall apply.

33.2 Conduct of meeting: who to preside

The provisions of article 32.4 shall apply regarding presiding over the meetings of the Council.

33.3 Authority to Adjourn

- a) The Chairperson of a meeting of the Council may, with the consent of the members present in the meeting, adjourn the meeting, from time to time; but no business shall be transacted at any such adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place.
- b) No notice of the adjourned meeting shall be necessary, unless the meeting is adjourned for more than ten days.

Article 34. PROCEDURE OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

- (a) The Chairperson of the Council shall, when present, preside over all the meetings of the Governing Council;
- (b) If the Chairperson is not present at any meeting of the Governing Council, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside over the meeting;
- (c) In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the members of the Governing Council present at the meeting shall elect one from amongst themselves to be the Chairperson of that particular meeting;
- (d) At least four meetings of the Governing Council shall be held every year;
- (e) The Chairperson may themselves require the Secretary to call a meeting of the

- Governing Council at any time;
- (f) If a requisition in writing is made to the Chairperson by not less than one- fifth of the members of Governing Council having voting rights on the date of requisition but with a minimum of three, the Chairperson shall require the Secretary to call a meeting of the Governing Council within a reasonable time, which shall not exceed 15 days;
 - (g) Not less than seven clear days' notice of every meeting of the Governing Council shall be given to each member of the Governing Council;
 - (h) At any meeting of the Governing Council, "either eight or twenty-five percent of its total strength whichever is less" of the total strength of the Governing Council (as then constituted) shall be the quorum;
 - (i) Each member of the Governing Council, including the Chairperson shall have one vote and in-case of tie the Chairperson shall, in addition to their own vote, have a casting vote.
 - (j) There shall be no proxy at meetings of the Governing Council.
 - (k) The Governing Council shall meet at such times, as may be considered advisable, and may make such rules, as are considered necessary, as to the summoning and holding, of the meetings of the Governing Council, and for the transaction of business at such meetings.
 - (l) The records of the proceedings of the Governing Council shall be open for examination by the members of the Governing Council.

Article 35. VOTING

- a) At any meeting of the Council, every eligible member present shall be entitled to one vote. In the event of an equality votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote in addition to the their own.
- b) No person other than an eligible member shall be entitled to vote at the meeting of the Council and no member shall nominate any other person to vote on their behalf except as otherwise provided in these Articles.

Article 36. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Minutes of the meetings of the Council shall be maintained in the manner prescribed in the relevant Act.

Article 37. BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS

37.1 Books of Accounts

- a) The Governing Council shall maintain proper Books of Accounts with respect to:
 - i. all sums of money received and expended by the Council and the matters in respect of which the receipt and expenditure took place;
 - ii. all sales and purchases of goods by the Council; and
 - iii. the assets and liabilities of the Council.
- b) The Books of Accounts shall be kept at the Registered Office of the Council or at such other place(s) as may be decided by the Governing Council.

37.2 Inspection of Accounts

- a) The Books of Accounts shall be open for inspection by the members of the Governing Council during the office hours.
- b) The Governing Council shall, from time to time frame rules to determine the conditions under which the accounts and books of the Council shall be open for inspection by the members of the Council.
- c) Notwithstanding para (b), no Member of the Council shall have any right to inspect any account or book or document of the Council, except as provided by law or authorized by the Governing Council or by a resolution of the Council in a general meeting.
- d) The accounts and books of the Council shall be open for inspection by an officer duly authorized by the Central Government for ascertaining or verifying the income and expenditure of the Council or for such purposes as may, by agreement between the Council and the Central Government, be specified in this regard.

37.3 Balance Sheet and Report

A printed copy of the audited Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet of the Council, together with the report of the Auditor and of the Governing Council, shall be:

- a) circulated through electronic and / or physical mode at the registered email / postal address of every member, at least fourteen days prior to the AGM of the Council;
- b) kept at the registered office of the Council for the inspection of members during a period of at least fourteen days before the AGM; and
- c) after the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account have been laid before the members in the AGM, three copies of the Balance Sheet signed by the DG/ Executive Director or Secretary, shall (in the case of a Council incorporated under the Act) be filed with the competent authority as required by the Act.

Article 38. AUDITORS

- (a) Auditors shall be appointed at the AGM of the Council.
- (b) The rights and duties of the auditors shall be regulated in accordance with the provisions of the Act.
- (c) Any casual vacancy in the office of the Auditor may be filled by the Governing Council.

Article 39. BUDGET

- (a) The Governing Council shall annually prepare a Budget for the ensuing year and shall submit it to the Council on or before such date as may be determined by the Governing Council.
- (b) No expenditure shall be incurred until the Budget is sanctioned by the Governing Council.

(c) The budget shall be in such form as the Governing Council may direct from time to time.

(d) Supplementary estimates of expenditure shall be submitted for the sanction of the Governing Council on the date as may be specified by the Governing Council.

Article 40. EXPENDITURE

(a) Subject to the provisions of these Articles and the rules framed there under, the Governing Council may:

- i. incur such expenditure as it may deem fit and write off any sums.
- ii. delegate to the Chairperson or DG or Executive Director or other officer(s) of the Council, such financial powers as it may consider expedient.

(b) The Governing Council may, subject to control of the Council, and the Council may, subject to the provisions of these Articles, incur expenditure outside India, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force.

Article 41. CUSTODY AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

(a) The Governing Council shall make rules for the custody and disbursement of funds of the Council;

(b) The Accounts of the Council shall be opened in a Scheduled Bank, and all funds at the disposal of the Council, with the exception of petty cash and imprest, shall be paid into such Account.

Article 42. INVESTMENT OF FUNDS

The funds of the Council, which are not required for current expenditure may be placed in fixed deposit with any scheduled bank or may be invested in any security in which trust property may lawfully be invested under Section 20 of the Indian Trusts Act, 1882, subject to such instructions as may be issued from time to time by the Department of Public Enterprises, Government of India, with reference to investments.

Article 43. HEAD OFFICE / REGIONAL OFFICE(S)

43.1. Head Office: The Council shall have a Head Office.

43.2. The Regional Office(s): - The Council may have one or more Regional Office(s) as per the requirement.

43.3. Official Website:

(a) Council shall have an official website which shall be regularly updated/ maintained. The Council shall endeavour to make available its Mission and Vision document and all the important developments on the website.

(b) The Council shall have an official email ID which will be widely circulated to the members. The Council shall endeavour to circulate the information/ documents with its Members electronically in terms of e-governance policy of the Government of India.

Article 44. ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF COUNCIL

44.1 Basic Role

Council shall work in association with the Government to facilitate country's exports through diversification of products and markets, adhering to standards and quality.

44.2 Duties of Council

- (a) The Council shall, from time to time, obtain from its members, proposals for export and then prepare an integrated action plan for:
- i. the promotion of exports,
 - ii. the generation of production for exports,
 - iii. the setting of exports targets generally and also in relation to specific countries and commodities,
 - iv. the signing of MoUs/ agreements, foreign collaborations with partner agencies,
 - v. imparting export-oriented training programme to the member exporters, and
 - vi. giving wide publicity for creating awareness among exporters about trade developments, Government policies and opportunities available.
- (b) Such plans shall be prepared for every financial year or such longer or shorter period, as may be considered desirable in the circumstances by the Council.
- (c) The Council shall make all possible efforts to secure prompt execution of such plans.

Article 45. POWERS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

45.1 Power to give directions

- (a) The Central Government shall have the power to give directions to the Council(s) as to the performance of its function, where that Government considers such directions to be necessary:
- i. in the interests of national security, or
 - ii. in the interests of the national economy; or
 - iii. otherwise in the public interest.
- (b) The Central Government shall also have power to call for such reports, returns and other information with respect to the property and affairs of the Council, the conduct of its business and other matters connected with the performance of its functions, as the Central Government may consider necessary.
- (c) The Council shall be bound to comply with all directions issued by the Central Government under paragraph (a) or (b) of Article 45.1 and all provisions contained in the Export-Import Policy of the Central Government for the time being in force.
- (d) The Council(s) not following the provisions contained in para 2.78 of the Handbook of Procedures 2023 and other guidelines of Foreign Trade Policy shall be ineligible to issue Registration-Cum-Membership Certificate (RCMC)

and also shall be ineligible to get grants under Market Access Initiative (MAI) Scheme or any other benefits from the Government of India.

45.2. General power to modify:

The Central Government may at any time direct, by an order in writing, that the provisions of these Articles shall stand modified in such manner as the Central Government may direct as in relation to Councils in general or in relation to a group of Councils or a particular Council where such a direction appears to be necessary in public interest.

45.3 Foreign Collaboration

All agreements between the Council and any foreign collaborator shall require prior approval of the Central Government.

Article 46. ALTERATION OF ARTICLES

No addition to, modification or deletion of, any of these Articles shall be made without the prior approval of the Central Government. However, the Councils may carry out any alteration, extension or abridgement in their bye-laws which are consistent with the provisions of these Articles.

Article 47. MODIFICATION DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

To promote a smooth transition from the position prevailing before the adoption of these Articles, to the position resulting from the application of these Articles, the Governing Council may make such additions to, or modification in these Articles, subject to prior approval of the Central Government. But no such power shall be exercised after the expiry of two years from such adoption.

EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL FOR EOUs & SEZs

**EPC/SEZ/AM18/F-4
2th January 2025**

Minutes

MINUTES OF THE 2nd MEETING FOR THE YEAR (2024 - 2025) OF CENTRAL GOVERNING COUNCIL (CGC) OF EPCES HELD AT 1130 AM ON THURSDAY, 2nd JANUARY 2025 THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCING.

Following were present in the CGC meeting: -

1. Shri Srikanth Badiga, Chairman, Director, Phoenix Infocity SEZ (Conference Room)
2. Shri Alok Chaturvedi – Director General (Conference room)
3. Shri Deen Bandhu Singh, Deputy Development Commissioner, Falta SEZ
4. Shri Vilas Gupta, Managing Director, Taurus Englobe Private Limited, NSEZ (Conference Room)
5. Shri Sunil Puri, Regional Chairman, NSEZ and Director, Yaseen Lighting Pvt. Ltd, NSEZ (Conference Room)
6. Shri Sunil Rallan, CMD, J. Matadee Free Trade Zone Pvt. Ltd. (Through VC)
7. Shri Dhinesh Vardharajan, Managing Director, Manav Packaging Pvt. Ltd, MEPZ (Through VC)
8. Shri TC Thiagarajan, Managing Director, Chansuba Pumps Pvt. Ltd (Through VC)
9. Shri Milind Mungikar – Director, Zen Linen Pvt Ltd. (Through VC)
10. Shri Tushar Ruparelia, Partner, Trend Setters KFTZ, KSEZ (Through VC)
11. Shri Sivashanmugam Kumaresan, Regional Chairman, MEPZ and Rishaba Industries LLP, MEPZ (Through VC)
12. Shri Nilesh Upendra Jani. Regional Chairman, VSEZ and Director, Phoenix Tech Zone Pvt Ltd (Through VC)
13. Shri Vinod Kumar R., Director, Western India Cashew Co. Pvt. Ltd, CSEZ (Through VC)

EPCES Secretariat

1. Shri Tanu Aggarwal, Deputy Director General, EPCES
2. Shri Naveen Saxena, Assistant Director, EPCES
3. Shri Govind Yadav Executive Assistant to DG

It was informed that the required quorum was complete and the meeting was called to order.

New year greetings were exchanged.

Chairman welcomed the participants and briefed the members about the recent developments and his participation in the pre-budget consultation of the Trade and Services group meeting taken by with the Hon'ble Finance Minister on 26.12.2024. Chairman informed that EPCES has been regularly following up with the Commerce and

Finance Ministries about the issues related to SEZs and EOUs. Thanks to the persistent efforts of the EPCES bringing out the difficulties being faced by SEZ units in using ICEGATE, parallel filing of documents through SEZ Online has been continued till 10.1.2025. Hybrid work /Work from Home has also been allowed till 31.12.2027. Chairman informed that in the meeting with Hon'ble Finance Minister, EPCES raised very specific issues relating to SEZ/EOUs such as amendment in SEZ Act through Finance Bill incorporating DTA supplies on duty foregone basis, INR payment for DTA supplies of services, no export duty on DTA procurement by SEZ units, etc. He was hopeful of favourable consideration in the ensuing budget.

Thereafter, with the permission of Chair, agenda-wise discussion was taken up.

Agenda No. 1. Minutes of the meeting of the CGC held on 6.9.2024

CGC confirmed the minutes of the meeting of the CGC held on 6.9.2024.

Agenda No 2. Adoption of Model Articles of Association/Bye Laws circulated by the D/o Commerce with some minor changes.

2.1 Detailed discussions were held, particularly regarding Art 24.3 regarding reservation and Art 24.6 regarding retirement of elected members. Concerns about filling the vacancies were raised. It was pointed out that with the changed Art 10.(c) regarding representation of firms by allowing below Director level officers in case of larger firms, it was expected that vacancies will be filled. It was also pointed out that detail guidelines for implementation/election may be discussed once revised AoA are adopted and approved by EGM.

2.2 After detailed discussions, the CGC adopted the revised AoA circulated by the D/o Commerce vide their letter no 13/3/2023-E&MDA-DoC (Part (I)) dated 25.7.2024 with minor changes approved by the D/o Commerce vide their letter no 13/3/2023-E&MDA-DoC (Part 2) dated 17.7.2024 as incorporated in **Annexure A to the Minutes** and recommended to place the same before the next EGM for adoption.

Agenda No.3 To fix the date, time and venue for Extra-Ordinary General Body (EGM) Meeting for the year 2024-2025.

3.1 CGC decided that the Extraordinary General Meeting of Export Promotion Council for EOUs & SEZs (EPCES) may be held at 11:00 am on Friday, 7th February 2025 through hybrid mode.

3.2 CGC also approved the agenda for the Extraordinary General Meeting as under:

- (i) To consider, adopt and approve the revised Articles of Association, as enclosed at **Annexure A to the minutes.**
- (ii) Any other point with the permission of the Chair.

3.3 CGC also decided to authorize Shri Naveen Saxena, Assistant Director, EPCES to issue the notice of the Extra-Ordinary General (EGM) Meeting for the year 2024-25 to all members of the Council.

Chairman thanked all the participants.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY GENERAL BODY MEETING HELD ON
ON MONDAY, 24th FEBRUARY 2025 at 4 PM**

The Extraordinary General Meeting of Export Promotion Council for EOUs & SEZs (EPCES) was held at 4:00 PM on Monday, 24th February 2025 the meeting was held through video conferencing.

The list of members present is at Annexure – I.

It was informed that the required quorum was complete and the meeting was called to order.

Shri Srikanth Badiga, Chairman, EPCES, welcomed the participants and wished them a happy and prosperous New Year. He stated that the meeting was basically to consider and adopt the revised Memorandum of Association & Article of Association of the council as approved by the Department of Commerce and recommended by the CGC. He informed that once the same are approved in the EGM, the election to the CGC and RGCs will be undertaken and he hoped that all vacancies in the RGCs and CGC will be filled and there will be good representation from EOUs, SEZ units and SEZ Developers/Co-developers to take the council forward.

Thereafter, the agenda was taken up for consideration.

Agenda Point No. 1 : To consider, adopt and approve the Revised Memorandum of Association & Article of Association of EPCES.

Director General briefed the participants about the revised Memorandum of Association & Article of Association (copy at **Annexure II**). Department of Commerce has, vide their letter no 13/3/2023-E&MDA-DoC (part2) dated 17th December 2024, approved the proposal of EPCES for some minor changes vis-à-vis the revised Model Articles of Association circulated by the D/o Commerce vide their letter dated 25.7.2024. The minor changes vis-à-vis model AoA circulated by the Ministry are due to specific nature of EPCES having SEZ developer, SEZ Units and EOUs. They are as follow:

- (i) The model AoA (Article 24.2) provided that there will be minimum of 12 elected members (excluding the Regional Chairpersons). However, EPCES had specific composition representing SEZ developers, SEZ Units and EOUs. As per existing AoA of EPCES (Art 27.3), there were 7 elected members each from among SEZ developers, SEZ Units and EOUs (Total 21). Keeping in view relatively larger number of SEZ Units, it has been approved that there should be 14 members representing SEZ units (in place of 7) besides 7 each representing EOUs and SEZ developers (Total 28). Similarly, in the RGCs also, there will be 28 elected members (7 from SEZ Developers, 14 from SEZ Units, 7 from EOUs).

(ii) In the model AoA (Art 10 (c), the term used as authorization of **any Directors or any person in the position of Directors** to act its representative was not very clear. Hence, Government has now approved that valid members whose turnover is Rs 200 crore or more (in the preceding financial year) may be permitted to nominate any of its senior management personnel as defined in the Companies Act 2013, dealing with the SEZ/EOU matters of the said company or society, who may be duly authorized by way of board resolution. (The expression "senior management" means personnel of the company who are members of its core management team excluding Board of Directors comprising all members of management one level below the executive directors, including the functional heads). This will help in attracting better representation of larger companies in the CGC and RGC.

(iii) In the model AoA (Art 32.1), quorum for a general meeting shall be as per Companies Act, 2013 or as per the Society Registration Act, as applicable. In the existing AoA of EPCES (Art 17.2(b)), it is provided that the quorum for a general meeting shall be 25 ordinary members of the Council. This change has been approved in case of EPCES.

The revised Memorandum of Association & Article of Association have been approved by CGC in its meeting held on 2.1.2025 and have been recommended for consideration, adoption and approval of the EGM.

After detailed discussions, the following resolution was approved by the General Body.

“Resolved that the proposed amendments in the MOA and AOA as per agenda and placed at Annexure -2 be approved and adopted”

Agenda No. 2 : Any other item with the approval of Chairman.

There being no other items, the meeting ended with a vote of thanks to all the members who participated in the meeting and to the Chair.

Export Promotion Council for EOUs and SEZs

Zonal Development Commissioner will be Returning Officer for conducting the following EPCES Elections:

I Election of all Members of Central Governing Council:

Sl.No.	Name of the Zone	No. of Vacancies from EOU Category	No. of Vacancies from SEZ Units Category	No. of Vacancies from SEZ Developers Category	Total
1	Cochin Special Economic Zone, Cochin	1	2	1	4
2	Falta Special Economic Zone, Kolkata	1	2	1	4
3	Kandla Special Economic Zone, Gandhidham, Kutch (Gujarat)	1	2	1	4
4	MEPZ Special Economic Zone, Chennai	1	2	1	4
5	Noida Special Economic Zone, Noida (U.P.)	1	2	1	4
6	SEEPZ Special Economic Zone, Mumbai	1	2	1	4
7	Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone, Visakhapatnam	1	2	-	3
	Total	7	14	6	27

II. Election of Members of Regional Governing Council will be conducted by Development Commissioner:

Sl.No.	Name of the Zone	No. of Vacancies from EOU Category	No. of Vacancies from SEZ Units Category	No. of Vacancies from SEZ Developers Category	Total
1	Cochin Special Economic Zone, Cochin	7	13	7	27
2	Falta Special Economic Zone, Kolkata	7	14	7	28
3	Kandla Special Economic Zone,	7	14	7	28

	Gandhidham, Kutch (Gujarat)				
4	MEPZ Special Economic Zone, Chennai	7	13	7	27
5	Noida Special Economic Zone, Noida (U.P.)	7	13	7	27
6	SEEPZ Special Economic Zone, Mumbai	7	14	7	28
7	Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone, Visakhapatnam	7	14	6	27

Proposed Election Schedule for conducting elections of CGC, RGC, Vice Chairman EPCES & Regional Vice-Chairmen for 2025-27.

Election Schedule for conducting elections for CGC, Vice Chairman & RGC and Regional Vice Chairman

[in case no contest for CGC& RGCs]

Sl. No	Day & Date	Particulars
1	Friday, 11th April 2025	Date of Issue of Notification and Sending of draft List of Electorate to Returning Officers i.e. Development Commissioners
2	Wednesday, 16th April 2025	Display of draft electorate List on the website of the Office of the Development Commissioner
3	Tuesday, 22nd April 2025	Last Date for Receipt of objections
4	Thursday, 24th April 2025	Scrutiny of objections by Office of DC (RO)
5	Monday, 28th April 2025	Final List of Electorate to Returning Officers
6	Tuesday, 29th April 2025	Sending of Nomination forms by Office of DC (RO) Through Email
7	Friday, 2nd May 2025	Last Date for receipt of nomination Forms
8	Monday, 5th May 2025	Scrutiny of nomination Forms
9	Tuesday, 6th May 2025	Notice for withdrawal of nomination & putting of nominations on the website
10	Friday, 9th May 2025	Last date for withdrawal of nomination
11	May 2025	In case of no contest, declaration of results by RO(DC)
<p>1st meeting of the newly elected CGC can be convened with due notice to elect the Vice Chairman amongst the new elected CGC members.</p> <p>As per clause 6.2 of EPCES Elections Bye-Laws, Director-General shall function as the Returning Officer for the election of Vice-Chairman.</p> <p>In case there is no contest for the post of Vice-Chairman, the declaration of election results of Vice-Chairman EPCES and Members of the Central Governing Council & Regional Governing Council will be announced by the Director-General EPCES in May 2025.</p> <p>In case, there is the contest for the post of Vice-Chairman EPCES, the proposed schedule is as under:-</p>		
1	Monday, 2nd June 2025	Intimations to NSDL by DG EPCES (Returning Officer)
2	Thursday, 5th June 2025	Casting of Electronic Voting
3	Monday, 9th June 2025	Last date for the casting of votes by E-voting
4	Tuesday, 10th June 2025	Counting of Votes
5	Tuesday, 10th June 2025	Announcement of Results of Vice-Chairman

**Schedule for conducting elections for CGC, Vice Chairman & RGC and
Regional Vice Chairman
[in case contest for CGC, RGC & Vice Chairman]**

Sl. No	Day & Date	Particulars
1	Friday, 11th April 2025	Date of Issue of Notification and Sending of draft List of Electorate to Returning Officers i.e. Development Commissioners
2	Wednesday, 16th April 2025	Display of draft electorate List on the website of the Office of the Development Commissioner
3	Tuesday, 22nd April 2025	Last Date for Receipt of objections
4	Thursday, 24th April 2025	Scrutiny of objections by Office of DC (RO)
5	Monday, 28th April 2025	Final List of Electorate to Returning Officers
6	Tuesday, 29th April 2025	Sending of Nomination forms by Office of DC (RO) Through Email
7	Friday, 2nd May 2025	Last Date for receipt of nomination Forms
8	Monday, 5th May 2025	Scrutiny of nomination Forms
9	Tuesday, 6th May 2025	Notice for withdrawal of nomination & putting of nominations on the website
10	Friday, 9th May 2025	Last date for withdrawal of nomination
11	Wednesday, 14th May 2025	In case of elections, intimations to NSDL By Returning Officers
12	Monday, 19th May 2025	Casting of Electronic Voting
13	Wednesday, 21st May 2025	Last date for the casting of votes by E-voting
14	Thursday, 23rd May 2025	Counting of Votes
15	Thursday, 23rd May 2025	Announcement of Results by Office of DC (RO)
<p>1st Meeting of newly elected CGC may be held with due notice to elect the Vice-Chairman for 2025-27</p> <p>In case there is no contest for the post of Vice-Chairman EPCES, the declaration of election results of Vice-Chairman EPCES and Members of the Central Governing Council and Regional Governing Council.</p> <p>In case there is the contest for the post of Vice-Chairman EPCES:-</p>		
1	Monday, 9th June 2025	Intimations to NSDL by DG EPCES (Returning Officer)
2	Thursday, 12th June 2025	Casting of Electronic Voting
3	Monday, 16th June 2025	Last date for the casting of votes by E-voting
4	Tuesday, 17th June 2025	Counting of Votes
5	Tuesday, 17th June 2025	Announcement of Results of Vice-Chairman