

Handbook

JCC: Dissolution of the USSR

Open Agenda

USSR

Handbook

JCC: Dissolution of the USSR

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JOINT CRISIS COMMITTEE: DISSOLUTION OF THE USSR HANDBOOK

Starting Date: June 3, 1989

The Congress of the People's Deputies have voted to form the new, empowered Supreme Soviet in its "1st" convocation.

This document is aimed at informing the delegates about the structure of the JCC along with the rules of procedure and other details governing the conduct thereof. All delegate activity conducted within the JCC shall be in accordance with the rules provided in this document. This handbook shall further provide the details for the committees rules of procedure (ROP) in all cases except for when the reader is explicitly forwarded to the EUROsimA 2022 Rules of Procedure document. The first three rules of that document shall also apply to the JCC.

DISCLAIMER: Certain historical liberties were taken to ensure a smoother and more engrossing debate for all involved. Thank you for your attention.

JCC: Dissolution of the USSR will consist of two committees, hereafter referred to as "(individual) chambers". These chambers are:

1. **Soviet of the Union**
2. **Soviet of Nationalities**

Moreover, some joint sessions will be organized where the delegates from both chambers are going to convene under the name **Supreme Soviet of the USSR**. (shortened name: **SSUSSR**)

INTRODUCTION TO THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE USSR

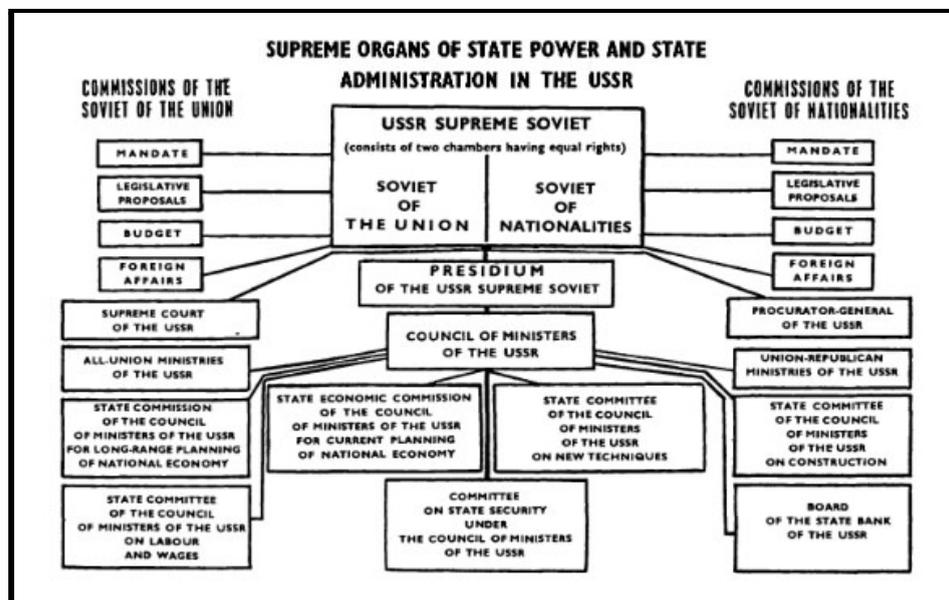
Even though the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was established in 1938 as the highest legislative body in the USSR, its composition, legislative procedure, and relation with other state organs were modified by a constitutional amendment ratified in 1988.

According to the 1988 Constitution:

- **The Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR** (shortened name: **CPDUSSR**) is a legislative body which is also designated as the highest organ of state power in the USSR.
 - It has a total of 2250 deputies (named the **People's Deputy of USSR**) of whom 750 are elected from territorial constituencies, 750 from national-territorial electoral districts and 750 from all-Union public organizations (like the Communist Party or trade unions).
 - It convenes only twice each year.
 - It chooses the delegates of both chambers of the SSUSSR.
- The **Supreme Soviet of the USSR** is a legislative body which consists of members chosen among the deputies of the CPDUSSR.

- The members in the **Soviet of the Union** are chosen among the deputies elected from territorial constituencies or from all-Union public organizations.
- The members in the **Soviet of Nationalities** are chosen among the deputies elected from national-territorial electoral districts or from all-Union public organizations. They are directly associated with and thus represent the republic or the public organization they have been elected from.
- Both chambers of SSUSSR are equal, none is superior to the other.
- Both chambers have their own chairmen, and the aforementioned joint sessions are chaired in a rotating fashion by the **Chairman of the Soviet of the Union (Evgeny Primakov)** and the **Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities (Rafiq Nishonov)** in this order. Occasionally, the sessions may also be chaired by the **Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mikhael Gorbachev**.
- The **Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR** (shortened name: **PSSUSSR**) is the body responsible from the organization of SSUSSR. It:
 - Convenes the sessions SSUSSR,
 - Organizes the preparation of the sessions of the SSUSSR,
 - Signs the acts of the SSUSSR and publishes them,
 - Submits reports to the SSUSSR, when necessary.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE USSR AND THE COMPOSITION OF GOVERNMENT



This is an organizational chart of the Soviet Union, courtesy of the *Soviet History Archive*. Such a chart can help to illuminate the extent of the power of the Supreme Soviet and to give members ideas as to how they might utilize the Soviet apparatus when drafting their legislations. One important point is that the Commissions of the Soviet of the Union/Soviet of Nationalities exist within these chambers and do not exist independently of the members. In short, they are irrelevant for this JCC.

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS & IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT POSTS

Nikolai Ryzhkov - Chairman of the Council of Ministers

Eduard Shevardnadze - Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dmitry Yazov - Minister of Defence

Vadim Bakatin - Minister of Interior

Konstantin Katushev - Minister of Foreign Economic Relations

Yuri Maslyukov - Chairman of the State Planning Committee

Boris Gostev - Minister of Finance

Veniamin Yakovlev - Minister of Justice

Anatoly Lukyanov - First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Unless stated otherwise, the rules of procedure written below are applicable for the sessions of both chambers and for the joint sessions.

1) Beginning of the Sessions

- Each session shall commence with the role call taken by the chairman.
- Quorum is met when the total number of delegates present in the committee exceeds one-half the number of total delegates. **A session cannot commence unless the quorum is met.**
- After the quorum is established, every deputy shall deliver an opening speech of one-and-a-half minutes **only in the first session.**

2) The General Speakers' List (GSL)

- During the first session, a General Speakers' List (GSL) will be established, which will follow the procedure established by EUROsimA 2022 Rules of Procedure.
- There will be separate General Speakers' Lists for each individual chamber and the joint session.
- The General Speakers' List cannot be exhausted at any time for the duration of the conference.

3) Caucuses

In JCC: Dissolution of the USSR, There are three types of caucuses:

- Moderated Caucus**, which follows the procedure established by EUROsimA 2022 Rules of Procedure.
- Unmoderated Caucus**, which follows the procedure established by EUROsimA 2022 Rules of Procedure.
- Semi-Moderated Caucus**, which is quite similar to a Moderated Caucus, with the sole exception of the absence of "total time" and "individual speaking

time”. The chairman is the only authority with the means of deciding the “total time” of the caucus and may interrupt or cut off the speech of any committee member. Nevertheless, the chairman must explain their reasons to the committee member if they decide to cut off their speech. In a Semi-Moderated Caucus, the right to speak will be granted by the Chairman and the congressperson may sit while they are delivering a speech. The maximum speech length is limited to 5 minutes. While delivering a speech during a semi-moderated caucus, a delegate is free to either sit or stand.

- During the sessions of **individual chambers**, **Semi-Moderated** and **Unmoderated Caucuses** can be utilized.
- During **joint sessions**, **Moderated** and **Unmoderated Caucuses** can be utilized.

4) Other Motions

In total, there are 8 motions that could be introduced in JCC: Dissolution of the USSR. **Those coded in black shall follow the procedure established by EUROsimA 2022 Rules of Procedure. Those coded in red shall be regulated by this document solely.** These motions are:

- a. Motion to Initiate a Moderated/Semi-Moderated/Unmoderated Caucus**
- b. Motion to Extend the Previous Caucus**
- c. Motion to Terminate the Caucus**
- d. Motion to Introduce a Legislation** (which can only be given during joint sessions)
- e. Motion to Entertain an Amendment**
- f. Motion to Entertain a Rider**
- g. Motion to Suspend the Meeting**
- h. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting**

5) The Chairmen

- Each chamber has a permanent chairman who reserves full right to moderate the debate and steer the committee as they see fit.
- If a tie is to occur during a substantive vote, the chairman shall submit a vote (of their discretion) to break the tie.
- The joint sessions shall be chaired by the chairmen of the individual chambers on an alternating basis. During the presence of **Mikhail Gorbachev**, the joint sessions shall be chaired by him and the chairmen of individual chambers shall act as his deputies.

6) Points

- All points laid out in the EUROsimA 2022 Rules of Procedure shall be applicable here.

7) The Conduct of Joint Sessions of SSUSSR

- Members are free to choose their own seating during joint sessions.

- The joint sessions will be dominated by debate on legislations and voting procedures on these legislations. Legislations and procedures of debate and voting are further detailed under the “Legislations” section.
- Provided that there are no legislations to discuss and vote upon, the joint session may act as a forum of debate on the Supreme Soviet’s agenda items. In such a case, all provisions of debate applicable for individual chambers shall also apply here.

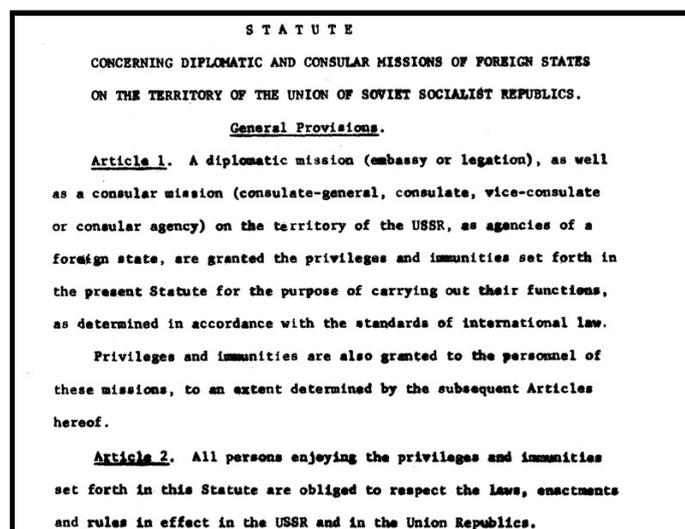
DOCUMENTS

1) Legislation

The primary type of document that both chambers can issue is a legislation. A piece of legislation can involve itself with any and all matters, provided that the chamber issuing it is acting within the competences defined in this handbook. The legislation may seek to address any new development or to re-define the legal status quo of the country. However, no piece of legislation can amend the constitution, as this is within the authority of the Congress of the People’s Deputies.

A legislation may also be proposed to the Supreme Soviet from the Council of Ministers and in more extreme cases, the Presidium. Faced with such proposals, the Supreme Soviet may vote to either accept them unconditionally, accept them but with a view to amend them afterwards, or to fully reject them. A full rejection may cause issues with the executive branch, and members of the Supreme Soviet may have to legislate on the subject matter of the rejected proposal by their own agency in order to prevent any further strain in relations between the SSUSSR and the executive.

Typically, a legislation does not have a rigid format. The members are expected to emulate the following example from a legal document dated 1966. A **title** (LAW ON THE RESETTLEMENT OF CRIMEAN TATARS, for example) should be followed by the provisions of the article, which should be labeled as simply “**General Provisions**” as in the example. A “Specific Provisions” section may also be added to detail unique applications of the legislation if applicable. Under such titles will be the substantive content itself, namely the “articles”. Although there is no specific formatting for the articles, they should be written in passive voice.



1.1) General Provisions Regarding Legislations

There are certain provisions that are universal for all legislations.

1.1.1) A legislation is to have at least one (1) main submitter.

1.1.2) A legislation is to have at least three (3) sponsors.

1.1.3) With the exception of major documents such as treaties, legislations may at most be one-page long.

1.1.4) Competences of chambers outlined in this handbook shall not be violated by any chamber.

1.1.5) Legislations may only be proposed during sessions of individual chambers. No legislations shall be proposed during joint sessions.

1.1.6) Legislations may be prepared discreetly and will not be immediately announced to the chamber by the chairman.

1.1.7) Amendments may only be proposed to during joint sessions.

1.1.8) A simple majority is required for the approval of all legislations and amendments.

1.1.9) Any legislation that fails the vote shall not be entertained again.

1.1.10) If there are two different legislations are submitted on the same topic which overlap/contradict with one another, the Chairman has the discretion on how to proceed with the harmonization of these two legislations.

1.2) Debate Procedures for Legislations

The procedure of debate for legislations will be directly dictated by the relevant chairman of the joint session. Acting in accordance with when the legislations were submitted and giving precedence to those that were submitted earlier, the chairman will allow, after a **motion to introduce a legislation** is given, for reading time and then call upon the main submitter(s) of the legislation to deliver a speech on the legislation for a time duration of their own discretion. At the end of the submitter's speech, questions may either be entertained or not, according to the wishes of the main submitter(s). Thereafter, the chairman will entertain both speeches for and against the legislation without particular order or designation.

Procedure regarding amendments will similarly be dictated by the chairman, bypassing the typical hurdles of the Harvard procedure. After a **motion to entertain an amendment** is given, a debate within a debate will be opened during which the merits of the amendment will be discussed, and this debate will be terminated with a vote on the amendment. This "debate within a debate" will be characterized by the exact same procedure used for the debate on legislations themselves.

During legislation and amendment debates, motions of the Harvard procedure will be applicable and may be given by the members.

IF THERE ARE LEGISLATIONS ON THE SAME AGENDA WHICH CONTRADICT/LAPSE WITH EACH OTHER, THE CHAIRMAN WILL BE EMPOWERED TO RESOLVE SUCH A DISPUTE ACCORDING TO HIS OWN DISCRETION.

1.3) Rider Legislations

A special procedure pertains to the rider legislations. A member may seek to tie their legislation to that of another member, provided that they have a mutual understanding. Accordingly, a **motion to entertain a rider** can be given which will not be subject to a vote. As a consequence, the two pieces of legislation will be linked, and the acceptance/rejection of the bill currently being debated will mean the success/failure of both. After a legislation that was given as a rider to another fails, it may not be entertained again.

To give an example, consider two legislations, legislation 1 and legislation 2. Both documents have been submitted for consideration in the Supreme Soviet joint session. Since it was submitted first, legislation 1 will first be entertained. Now, suppose that the submitter of legislation 2 contacts the submitter of legislation 1 and proposes to make legislation 2 a rider to legislation 1. This request is accepted, and now the two legislations are linked. Debate goes on as usual and now legislation 2 might also be referred to. However, when the vote takes place, the results affect both: If the simple majority is in favor, both legislations are accepted and the same applies for the vice-versa situation.



Legislation 1



Legislation 2 (Rider legislation)

2) Directive

This type of document is only permissible for the members of the Soviet of Nationalities. Deputies of this chamber may prepare **INDIVIDUAL directives** to try and influence developments in their constituent republic. Collaboration on directives is not permitted and each member can act only on their own behalf.

The scope and subject matter of directives are strictly limited. It is not possible for a member to have direct influence on the government of their republic, as they are simply deputies elected from that particular constituency and do not have function as the particular

representative of that constituency's government. Nevertheless, subtle actions meant to sway the public opinion towards either pro-Moscow or anti-Moscow leanings are possible.

It must be mentioned that real change and success are more possible with the fate of the legislations and the general workings of the parliament. Directives not only lack guarantee of success, but may also jeopardize the position of the member issuing them.

A typical directive does not have a proper format. The content has to answer the wh-questions (what?,when?,why?,where?,who?) and be plausible, bearing in mind the limited influence and power of the deputy. The secretariat reserves the right to overrule all directives, and the member whose directive was accepted/rejected will know the fate of their directive as quickly as possible. A sample directive is as follows, courtesy of EUROsimA 2019:

1) The Committee of Public Safety has decided to, by the month of ..., establish new 'Information Centers' via the creation of ... in order to gather information about public opinion for future agendas, which will be placed in... with the support from...

3) Submission of Questions

Members may also submit questions, both in oral and written settings, to the Soviet government, namely the Council of Ministers and its specific departments, and the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet (Mikhael Gorbachev).

3.1) Oral Questions

These may only be submitted when the relevant government representative is present. Usually, oral questions can be submitted after the representative delivers a speech, however questions may also be submitted if that representative is summoned to the individual chamber/Supreme Soviet by a special procedure. Notwithstanding, an oral question may be raised when the chairman of the chamber/Supreme Soviet asks for questions and the members raise their placards. In this, it is no different than the questions asked after a GSL speech.

3.2) Written Questions

Written questions can be given at all times. A member may prepare a paper specifying the target of the question and the question itself, and then submit it to the chairboard from where it will be directed to its target. The answers will not be publicly declared as the member asking the question will be the only initial receiver of the answer(s). Written questions will immediately be made public and will appear in the vedomosti of the next day with its answer, if given by that point.

COMPETENCES OF CHAMBERS

Per the 1988 Constitution, although the chambers of the Supreme Soviet can debate whichever relevant topic of their own choosing, they are restricted in terms of their ability to legislate, except in the cases of shared competences. In this way, the chambers are able to both represent the constituent republics of the USSR and the country at-large. The following table demonstrates these legislative competences:

Competences of the Soviet of the Union	Shared Competences	Competences of the Soviet of Nationalities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Army-related issues (deployment, restructuring of the armed corps et cetera) ● Foreign policy issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Economic issues ● Individual rights and freedoms ● Maintenance of social harmony in the USSR ● Remaining issues of low politics such as culture, environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determination of borders of constituent republics ● Ethnic issues inside the Soviet Union ● Harmonization of republics' laws with the laws of the USSR

PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS

Apart from the independent delegates, a delegate could be a member of one of the following three parliamentary groups:

- a. **Interregional Deputies' Group**, which advocates for reform across the USSR (including the removal of the Communist Party from power) and whose members tend to favor their nation's interests.
 - b. **Communist Group**, which advocates for reform while preserving the unity of the USSR; its members' political beliefs are mostly in line with those of Gorbachev.
 - c. **Soyuz Group**, which is against the reforms and in favor of a strong, centralized USSR; it mostly consists of orthodox communists.
- A deputy belonging to a group does not necessarily possess powers to set them apart from independent delegates.
 - The only exception to the above rule is the right to hold a **group meeting**. Upon notifying the chairman and being granted permission (granting permission is at the discretion of the chairman), members of a parliamentary group may hold a meeting outside of their committees. These meetings can not exceed 5 minutes. Multiple parliamentary groups cannot hold a group meeting at the same time. **No group meeting can be taken during voting procedures.**
 - Every deputy has the right to change their membership status (to change parliamentary groups, to become independent, or to join a parliamentary group). **A deputy can change their membership status only for two times during the conference.** When a deputy changes their membership status, this will be publicly and immediately announced by the chair.

POLITICAL AGENDA OF THE SUPREME SOVIET

The political agenda of the Supreme Soviet is a fluid one, as the country and the Eastern Bloc itself are often scenes of instability and unanticipated developments. There are three types of issues that appear the most: **economic development and reform, interethnic relations and**

conflicts, the question of rights and freedoms, and issues of diplomatic importance. By the 3rd of June, 1989, these are the most pressing matters on the categories

Economic Development and Reform: A possible Thirteenth Five-Year Plan and its basic principles to be submitted to the Soviet Government

Interethnic Relations and Conflicts: Developments in the Baltic countries and protests against Soviet rule

Question of Rights and Freedoms: Freedom of press and mass media

Issues of Diplomatic Importance: Prosecution of Soviet war criminals with offences in Afghanistan

VEDOMOSTI

At the beginning of each day, with the exception of the first (19 May), a printed publication called the **Vedomosti of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union** will be distributed among members of the chambers. Within this newspaper, the developments of the previous day will be given, and legislations which have passed, failed, or are currently pending a vote will also appear. A provisional set of agenda items will also be given and members will be expected to try and address these to the best of their abilities.

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINTOUTS

At the beginning of the first session, the delegates will be provided with a short, printed excerpt from the Constitution of the USSR. The excerpt will consist of selected chapters from the first half of the constitution, mainly those establishing a general framework for the functioning of the Soviet state and its politics. The printouts will be aimed at guiding the delegates in drafting legislations which are consistent with the constitution, as well as the political and economic structure of the USSR.