

Servas International: DV Nov 2011 - Distant Vote November 2011

General Announcement to all Servas Countries

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1. Distant Vote Schedule

12 November 2009: The Distant Vote process started when the Timetable of Distant Vote dates was sent to National Secretaries by SI President.

30 May 2011: For DV Nov 2011 the closing dates for submitting motions was May 30, 2011, on June 5, 2011 the SI General Secretary sent out formal advice that four motions had been received, and that voting on DV Nov 2011 would close on November 30, 2011.

On or Before 30 Aug 2011

SI General Secretary sends a general announcement on DV Nov 2011 to all countries on the “country@servas.org” list advising the motions to be decided and the voting procedure.

On or Before 15 Sept 2011

Distant Vote Administrator (DVA) sends a separate DV Nov 2011 Voter Mailout by e-mail direct to the National Secretary of each Servas Member Group eligible to vote. This Voter Mailout includes the information in the general announcement plus a request to confirm they have received the voter mailout.

On or before 31 Oct 2011

Distant Vote Administrator sends out the Voting Paper and instructions to National Secretaries of Member Groups eligible to vote.

30 Nov 2011 Voting Closes/Ends

On or before 31 Dec 2011

Distant Vote Administrator sends the Distant Vote results for each motion to the SI General Secretary

SI General Secretary advises National Secretaries of the Distant Vote results before they are published on Servas websites and in SI News.

On or before 31 Jan 2011

Distant Vote Administrator sends Servas EXCO a written report on the Distant Vote, including the voting results on each motion, the number of member groups allowed to vote, a detailed list of how each member group voted on non-secret motions and the number of votes received but not counted with the reason they were disallowed.

2. Motions to be decided by the Distant Vote

The motions as advised on June 5, 2011 were:

Moved by EXCO:

1. To approve the 2010 Audited Accounts
2. To approve of the 2012 SI Budget
3. To modify the decisions of the 2009 GA related to registration of Servas International, to allow EXCO to proceed with the registration.

Moved by Britain, seconded by Singapore, Germany, Belgium, Russia, Finland, New Zealand, Spain, Norway

4. To fully fund the Youth Development Officer to attend the next General Assembly, as an elected officer of Servas International.

Updates to the motions:

1. Motion 1 has been withdrawn, because the audit report has not been completed, and so the Audit Committee has not been able to review it.
2. Motion 2 has been withdrawn, because a revised 2012 Budget is not ready to be presented. The 2012 budget will be the one approved at the 2009 GA. (Please see the Background Information for more details.)
3. Motion 3. Wording has been expanded, to the following:
Proceed to register Servas International (SI) as a not-for-profit citizens volunteer organization (Non-government-organization: NGO) with an international seat in Canada or similar middle-size country with modern NGO legislation, and reformat SI Statutes for review and approval by the next General Assembly.

[Accepting this motion would change the decision of the 2009 GA, to register SI in Switzerland.] (Please see the Background Information for more details.)
4. Motion 4 has been withdrawn by Britain.
(Please see the Background Information for more details.)

Thus there will be 1 motion to be decided by DV Nov 2011 as follows:

DV Nov 2011 Motions requiring a Double Majority – NONE

DV Nov 2011 Motions requiring a Simple Majority only:

Motion 1.

Proceed to register Servas International (SI) as a not-for-profit citizens volunteer organization (Non-government-organization: NGO) with an international seat in Canada or similar middle-size country with modern NGO legislation, and reformat SI Statutes for review and approval by the next General Assembly.

Notes:

1. “The Distant Voting process shall include three voting options for each motion, "support/yes", "against/no" and "abstain", and that abstain votes shall not be counted as a vote for or against the motion.” [SI Statutes VII Distant Voting, 9)]
2. “Motions shall be declared adopted as if they have been passed by a meeting of the General Assembly” if they get a **double majority**:
 - a) when the majority of the votes cast are "support/yes",
 - b) AND when the "support/yes" vote is at least four tenths of the number of member groups allowed to vote in the Distant Vote.” [SI Statutes VII Distant Voting, 11)]

For DV Nov 2011 four tenths of the 80 voting Member Groups would be 32 – thus a majority, with 32 or more “support/yes” votes, is needed to get a double majority.

(This assumes all 80 Member Groups have met all their financial obligations and are allowed to vote. [SI Statutes VI Voting at Meetings, 3] – see Voter List for Distant Vote in Section 4 below.)

Any motions that require but do not receive a double majority can be considered as guidance to EXCO, but will not be considered to be passed. These motions can be included in the next DV or put on the agenda for the next GA.

3. Background Information

Background summaries, relating to the motions, are being posted on the DV Nov 2011 page of the Servas International web site as they are available – see Section 5 below for link details.

4. Voting Procedures

These Voting Procedures are based on the email “Proposed Timetable and Process for DV”, dated 23 July 2011, prepared for the July EXCO meeting by the Distant Vote Administrator. EXCO delegated the SI General Secretary to work with the Distant Vote Administrator to finalise the processes to be used for the DV Nov 2011.

There are no secret votes, and so the DVA report, which will be published, will contain the list of voters and how they voted on the motion. Therefore, the SI General Secretary has agreed that independent persons or organisations will not be needed to assist in running DV Nov 2011.

The key parts of the voting procedures to be used are:

Voter List for Distant Vote

The Member Groups eligible to vote in DV Nov 2011 are the countries in the list dated 30 November 2010 subject to confirmation by the SI Treasurer that they have met their financial obligations and are thus allowed to vote. [SI Statutes, VI Voting at Meetings, 3] **The final list of Servas Member Groups eligible and able to vote in DV Nov 2011 is being finalised by the SI Treasurer and should be available by 30 September 2011.**

The SI General Secretary has delegated the Distant Vote Administrator to compile the Voter List for DV Nov 2011 by direct contact with the National Secretaries of each country eligible and able to vote in this Distant Vote to confirm the name and contact details for the person casting the DV vote for their country.

Voting Method

E-mail will be the primary method of voting for DV Nov 2011. Votes by fax or mail will also be accepted. Each voting paper will contain the one motion to be voted on, with space to record the vote - "support/yes", "against/no" or "abstain" and a unique ID number (an 8 digit random number).

The Distant Vote Administrator will keep a confidential record of the ID number of the voting paper sent to each voter (National Secretary or nominated authorised voter) The ID number will be used to verify that the vote is being cast by an eligible voter.

The ID numbers will be used to confirm the validity of votes received as follows:

- a/ Votes must have a valid ID number to be counted.
- b/ The voter will be e-mailed confirmation that their vote has been received.
- c/ A vote cannot be changed after it has been submitted and received. Thus conflicting multiple votes, with the same ID number, will be treated as invalid.

A valid vote will be counted for a motion if:

- b/ It is clear whether the vote is "support/yes", "against/no" or "abstain" for the motion.

Vote Counting and Results

The only voting information that will be provided by the Distant Vote Administrator prior to the closing and counting of the vote will be the number of votes received and confirmation that a vote has or has not been received from the voter for a Member Group.

Motions will be declared passed if the number of "support/yes" votes received for the motion is more than the number of "against/no" votes. "Abstain" votes are not counted in determining if the motion was passed. (SI Statues VII Distant Vote, Clause 9)

Motions that satisfy the double majority as defined by SI Statues VII Distant Vote, Clause 11, will "be declared as adopted as if they have been passed by a meeting of the General Assembly".

When the votes have been counted, the SI General Secretary will be sent a report stating whether the motion was passed, passed "as if by a GA" or not passed. Voting results will also be provided, including the total number of votes received, the number of "support/yes", "against/no" or "abstain" votes and the number of invalid or non votes, if any.

Within two months of the closing date of the vote the Distant Vote Administrator will send Servas EXCO a written report on the Distant Vote, including the voting results, the number of member groups allowed to vote, a detailed list of how each member group voted on non-secret motions and the number of any votes received but not counted with the reason they were disallowed.

5. *Links to Additional Information*

Servas Distant Vote Web pages

The SIEXCO website has a section for Distant Vote, and a separate section for DV Nov 2011. All emailed information will be put on this web page, along with larger background documents.

The direct DV Nov 2011 website address is:

www.servas.org/siexco/index.php/Distant_Vote#DV_Nov_2011

OR start with the Servas EXCO website: **www.siexco.org**
then click the "DV Nov 2011" link (at the top of the Latest News section)
then select and click the information you want to see, read and/or download.

DV Nov 2011 Discussion Forum

A Google group "Servas DV Nov 2011" has been set up to facilitate comments and discussion relating to the DV Nov 2011 motion. At this time this is a public group – anyone can view comments and anyone may join to post messages.

The Distant Vote Administrator is the "manager" for the group and will moderate messages from new members. The discussion forum will be closed at the end of voting, 30 November 2011!

Forum Web access: <http://groups.google.com/group/servas-dv-nov-2011>

Forum e-mail address: servas-dv-nov-2011@googlegroups.com