



# FLAG CODE

**THE UNITED NATIONS FLAG CODE  
AND REGULATIONS**

ST/SGB/132

## FLAG CODE

*The following is the text of the United Nations Flag Code as amended by the Secretary-General on November 11, 1952:*

Whereas by resolution 167 (II) of 20 October 1947 the General Assembly decided that the flag of the United Nations should be the official emblem adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 92 (I) of 7 December 1946, centred on a United Nations blue background, and authorized the Secretary-General to adopt a Flag Code, having in mind the desirability of a regulated use of the flag and the protection of its dignity;

Whereas under this authority a Flag Code was issued by the Secretary-General on 19 December 1947; and

Whereas it has become desirable to amend this Flag Code to permit display of the United Nations Flag by organizations and persons desiring to demonstrate their support of the United Nations;

The Secretary-General, by virtue of the authority vested in him, hereby rescinds the Flag Code of 19 December 1947 and adopts the following Flag Code:

### 1. Design of flag

The Flag of the United Nations shall be the official emblem of the United Nations, centred on a

United Nations blue background. Such emblem shall appear in white on both sides of the flag except when otherwise prescribed by regulation. The flag shall be made in such sizes as may from time to time be prescribed by regulation.

### 2. Dignity of flag

The flag shall not be subjected to any indignity.

### 3. Flag protocol

(1) The flag of the United Nations shall not be subordinated to any other flag;

(2) The manner in which the flag of the United Nations may be flown, in relation to any other flag, shall be prescribed by regulation.

### 4. Use of flag by the United Nations and specialized agencies of the United Nations

(1) The flag shall be flown:

(a) From all buildings, offices and other property occupied by the United Nations,

(b) From any official residence when such residence has been so designated by regulation;

(2) The flag shall be used by any unit acting on behalf of the United Nations such as any Committee or Commission or other entity established by the United Nations in such circumstances

not covered in this Code as may become necessary in the interests of the United Nations;

(3) The flag may be flown from all buildings, offices and other property occupied by any specialized agency of the United Nations.

#### 5. Use of flag generally

The flag may be used in accordance with this Flag Code by Governments, organizations and individuals to demonstrate support of the United Nations and to further its principles and purposes. The manner and circumstances of display shall conform, in so far as appropriate, to the laws and customs applicable to the display of the national flag of the country in which the display is made.

#### 6. Use of flag in military operations

The flag may be used in military operations only upon express authorization to that effect by a competent organ of the United Nations.

#### 7. Prohibition

The flag shall not be used in any manner inconsistent with this Code or with any regulations made pursuant thereto. On no account shall the flag or a replica thereof be used for commercial purposes or in direct association with an article of merchandise.

#### 8. Mourning

The Secretary-General will prescribe by regulation or otherwise the cases in which the flag shall be flown at half-mast as sign of mourning.

#### 9. Manufacture and sale of flag

(1) The flag may be manufactured for sale only upon written consent of the Secretary-General;

(2) Such consent shall be subject to the following conditions:

(a) The flag shall be sold at a price to be agreed upon with the Secretary-General,

(b) It shall be the responsibility of the manufacturer to ensure that every purchaser of the flag is furnished with a copy of this Code as well as a copy of any regulations issued pursuant thereto, and that each purchaser is informed that his use of the flag is subject to the conditions contained in this Code and in the regulations made pursuant thereto.

#### 10. Violation

Any violation of this Flag Code may be punished in accordance with the law of the country in which such violation takes place.

#### 11. Regulations

(1) The Secretary-General may delegate his authority under this Code;

(2) The Secretary-General or his duly authorized representative is the only person empowered to make regulations under this Code. Such regulations may be made for the purposes indicated in this Code and generally for the purpose of implementing or clarifying any provision of this Code whenever the Secretary-General or his duly authorized representative considers such implementation or clarification necessary.

Secretary-General

## REGULATIONS

*Effective 1 January, 1967, the following Regulations, implementing the United Nations Flag Code, replace the Regulations as amended by the Secretary-General on 11 November, 1952.*

*The Flag Code itself remains as amended on 11 November, 1952.*

### I. DIMENSIONS OF FLAG

(1) In pursuance to article 1 of the Flag Code the proportions of the United Nations Flag shall be:

(a) Hoist (width) of the United Nations Flag—2,

Fly (length) of the United Nations Flag—3;

or

(b) Hoist (width) of the United Nations Flag—3,

Fly (length) of the United Nations Flag—5;

or

(c) The same proportions as those of the national flag of any country in which the United Nations Flag is flown;

(2) The emblem shall in all cases be one half of the hoist of the United Nations Flag and entirely centred.

### II. FLAG PROTOCOL

In pursuance to article 3 (2) of the United Nations Flag Code the

manner in which the United Nations Flag may be displayed is as follows:

#### 1. General provisions

(a) Under article 5 of the Flag Code the United Nations Flag may be displayed or otherwise used in accordance with the Flag Code by Governments, organizations and individuals to demonstrate support of the United Nations and to further its principles and purposes;

(b) The United Nations Flag may be displayed alone or with one or more other flags to demonstrate support of the United Nations and to further its principles and purposes. The Secretary-General may, however, limit such display to special occasions either generally or in particular areas. In special circumstances he may restrict the display of the United Nations Flag to official use by United Nations organs and specialized agencies;

(c) When the United Nations Flag is displayed with one or more other Flags, all flags so displayed should be displayed on the same level and should be of approximately equal size;

(d) On no account may any flag displayed with the United Nations Flag be displayed on a higher level than the United Nations Flag

and on no account may any flag so displayed with the United Nations Flag be larger than the United Nations Flag;

(e) The United Nations Flag may be displayed on either side of any other flag without being deemed to be subordinated to any such flag within the meaning of article 3 (1) of the United Nations Flag Code;

(f) The United Nations Flag should normally only be displayed on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs from sunrise to sunset. The United Nations Flag may also be so displayed at night upon special occasions;

(g) The Flag should never be used as drapery of any sort, never festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free.

## 2. Closed circle of flags

The United Nations Flag should in no case be made a part of a circle of flags. In such a circle of flags, flags other than the United Nations Flag should be displayed in the English alphabetical order of the countries represented reading clockwise. The United Nations Flag itself should always be displayed on the flagpole in the centre of the circle of flags or in an appropriate adjoining area.

## 3. Line, cluster or semi-circle of flags

In line, cluster or semi-circle groupings all flags other than the United Nations Flag shall be displayed in the English alphabetical order of the countries repre-

ented starting from the left. The United Nations Flag, in such cases, should either be displayed separately in an appropriate area or in the centre of the line, cluster or semi-circle or, in cases where two United Nations Flags are available, at both ends of the line, cluster or semi-circle.

## 4. National flag of the country in which the display takes place

(a) The national flag of the country in which the display takes place should appear in its normal position according to the English alphabetical order;

(b) When the country in which the display takes place wishes to make a special display of its national flag, such a special display can only be made where the arrangement of the flags takes the form of a line, cluster or semi-circle grouping, in which case the national flag of the country in which the display is taking place should be displayed at each end of the line of flags separated from the grouping by an interval of not less than one fifth of the total length of the line.

## III. USE OF FLAG GENERALLY

(a) In accordance with article 5 of the United Nations Flag Code the United Nations Flag may be used to demonstrate the support of the United Nations and to further its principles and purposes;

(b) It is deemed especially appropriate that the United Nations Flag should be displayed on the following occasions:

(i) On all national and official holidays,

- (ii) On United Nations Day, 24 October,
- (iii) On the occasion of any official event, particularly in honour of the United Nations,
- (iv) On the occasion of any official event which might or is desired to be related in some way to the United Nations.

## IV. PROHIBITIONS

(a) In accordance with article 7 of the United Nations Flag Code on no account shall the United Nations Flag or a replica thereof be used for commercial purposes or in direct association with an article of merchandise;

(b) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in clause (a) of this section, neither the United Nations Flag nor any replica thereof shall be stamped, printed, engraved or otherwise affixed on any stationery, books, magazines, periodicals or other publications of any nature whatsoever in a manner such as could imply that any such stationery, books, magazines, periodicals or other publications were published by or on behalf of the United Nations unless such is in fact the case or in a manner such as has the effect of advertising a commercial product;

(c) Subject to the provisions of clauses (b) and (d) of this section neither the United Nations Flag nor any replica thereof should be affixed in any manner on any article of any kind which is not strictly necessary to the display of the United Nations Flag itself.

Without restricting the generality of the foregoing sentence the United Nations Flag should not be reproduced on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs and the like, nor printed nor otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes, nor used as any portion of a costume or athletic uniform or other clothing of any kind, nor used on jewellery.

(d) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this section, a replica of the United Nations Flag may be manufactured in the form of a lapel button;

(e) No mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture or drawing of any nature shall ever be placed upon or attached to the United Nations Flag or placed upon any replica thereof.

## V. MOURNING

(a) Upon the death of a Head of State or Head of Government of a Member State, the United Nations Flag will be flown at half-mast at United Nations Headquarters, at the United Nations Office at Geneva and at United Nations offices located in that Member State;

(b) On such occasions, at Headquarters and at Geneva, the United Nations Flag will be flown at half-mast for one day immediately upon learning of the death. If, however, Flags, have already been flying on that day they will not normally be lowered, but will instead be flown at half-mast on the day following the death;

(g) Should the procedure in paragraph (b) above not be practicable due to weather conditions or other reasons, the United Nations Flag may be flown at half-mast on the day of the funeral. Under exceptional circumstances it may be flown at half-mast on both the day of the death and the day of the funeral;

(d) United Nations offices other than those covered by paragraph (a) above, in the case of the death of a national figure or a Head of State or Head of Government of a Member State, will use their discretion, taking into account the local practice, in consultation with the Protocol Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and/or the Dean of the locally accredited Diplomatic Corps;

(e) The head of a specialized agency is authorized by the Secretary-General to lower the United Nations Flag flown by the agency to half-mast in cases where he wishes to follow the official mourning of the country in which the office of the agency is located. He may also lower the United Nations Flag to half-mast on any occasion when the specialized agency is in official mourning;

(f) The United Nations Flag may also be flown at half-mast on special instructions of the Secretary-General on the death of a world leader who has had a significant connexion with the United Nations;

(g) The Secretary-General may in special circumstances decide that the United Nations Flag, wherever displayed, shall be

flown at half-mast during a period of official United Nations mourning;

(h) The United Nations Flag when displayed at half-mast should first be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-mast position. The Flag should again be raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day;

(i) When the United Nations Flag is flown at half-mast no other flag will be displayed;

(j) Crepe streamers may be affixed to flagstaves flying the United Nations Flag in a funeral procession only by order of the Secretary-General of the United Nations;

(k) When the United Nations Flag is used to cover a casket, it should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

## VI. MANUFACTURE OF UNITED NATIONS FLAG

In accordance with article 9 (2) (a) of the United Nations Flag Code the Secretary-General hereby grants permission to sell the United Nations Flag without reference to the Secretary-General as to the price to be charged.

## VII. ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Attached is a schedule setting out the English alphabetical order of the Members of the United Nations.

*Secretary-General*

## SCHEDULE OF MEMBER NATIONS IN THE ENGLISH ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Afghanistan	Czechoslovakia	Kuwait	Rwanda
Albania	Dahomey	Laos	Saudi Arabia
Algeria	Denmark	Lebanon	Senegal
Argentina	Dominican Republic	Lesotho	Sierra Leone
Australia	Ecuador	Liberia	Singapore
Austria	El Salvador	Libya	Somalia
Barbados	Ethiopia	Luxembourg	South Africa
Belgium	Finland	Madagascar	Spain
Bolivia	France	Malawi	Sudan
Botswana	Gabon	Malaysia	Sweden
Brazil	Gambia	Maldives Islands	Syria
Bulgaria	Ghana	Mal	Thailand
Burma	Greece	Malta	Togo
Burundi	Guatemala	Mauritania	Trinidad and Tobago
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	Guinea	Mexico	Tunisia
Cambodia	Guyana	Mongolia	Turkey
Cameroon	Haiti	Morocco	Uganda
Canada	Honduras	Nepal	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
Central African Republic	Hungary	Netherlands	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Ceylon	Iceland	New Zealand	United Arab Republic
Chad	India	Nicaragua	United Kingdom
Chile	Indonesia	Niger	United Republic of Tanzania
China	Iran	Nigeria	United States
Colombia	Iraq	Norway	Upper Volta
Congo (Brazzaville)	Ireland	Pakistan	Uruguay
Congo (Democratic Republic of)	Israel	Panama	Venezuela
Costa Rica	Italy	Paraguay	Yemen
Cuba	Ivory Coast	Peru	Yugoslavia
Cyprus	Jamaica	Philippines	Zambia
	Japan	Poland	
	Jordan	Portugal	
	Kenya	Romania	

Note: In the event of any provision contained in this code or in any regulation made under this code being in conflict with the laws of any State governing the use of its national flag, said laws of any such State shall prevail.