SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN REGION OF CIGRE (SEERC)

RULES OF OPERATION

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I.   Preamble

Based on common interest to continue and foster international cooperation, the CIGRE National Committees of Central and Southeast Europe decided to set-up the **South East European Region of CIGRE (hereafter SEERC)**. According to Article 17 of the CIGRE Statutes, CIGRE Regions will initially need to establish procedures for their functioning, named *Rules of Operation*. This document provides these rules.

II.   Background and history of SEERC

The first draft of the founding document entitled Cooperation Agreement was discussed in the initial meeting of an informal group on May 25, 2009 at Kranjska Gora (Slovenia) with participation of representatives of CIGRE National Committees (NCs) from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Serbia and Slovenia. During the establishing convention in Milocer, Montenegro on the 13th of May 2013, the final founding document named Memorandum of Understanding was approved and signed by the present CIGRE NC representatives. Geographical proximity, common interest and former good relationship between the CIGRE National Committees of Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Ukraine resulted in unanimous consent to the MoU and setting up a new CIGRE Region operating under the name SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN REGION OF CIGRE (SEERC). The regional council was formed respecting the statutes of CIGRE and was endorsed as a Region of CIGRE by the CIGRE Administrative Council during the September 2013 Kazan (Russia) meeting.

The founding members of SEERC are CIGRE NC of Bosnia and Herzegovina, CIGRE NC of Croatia, CIGRE NC of Italy, CIGRE NC of Macedonia, CIGRE NC of Montenegro, CIGRE NC of Romania, CIGRE NC of Serbia, CIGRE NC of Slovenia and CIGRE NC of Ukraine. Expending ongoing efforts in encouraging neighbor countries to join CIGRE Region of SEERC resulted in current Region membership embracing following members: NC Austria, NC Bosnia & Herzegovina, NC Croatia, NC Czech and Slovak Republic, NC Georgia, NC Greece, NC Italy, NC Kosovo, NC Macedonia, NC Montenegro, NC Romania, NC Serbia, NC Slovenia, NC Turkey and NC Ukraine. The list of current members is subject to change.

III.   Primary Activity

Based on the *SEERC Position Paper from November 2014,* selected activities are as follows:
- Planning and development issues for particularly large investments like undersea AC and DC cables across the Adriatic as well as Mediterranean areas (linking Italy, Greece, Montenegro, Malta, Croatia, Albania, offshore wind parks, etc.),
- Modernization of the electric network, implementation of intelligent technologies in power systems, refurbishment of existing power systems,
- Asset management issues considering regional specificities,
- Improvements of power system resilience,
- Improvements of power system operation and control,
- Design and specific regional issues of the South-Eastern European electricity market,
- Mutual support and cooperation for drafting and establishing new technical standards,
- New European energy policy orientation towards sustainable developments, regional issues, solar & wind technologies, smart grids,
- Assessment of environmental topics (legal issues, EMF standards harmonization, aesthetics and acceptance, sustainable innovative technology),
- Sharing of advanced knowledge and experience with other regions,
- Innovative regional forums using intellectual potentials in South-East Europe.

These topics will be adopted in accordance to future needs.

IV.   Rules of Operation

Rule 1 – Rules of Operation
The *Rules of Operation* provided in this document are mandatory for every SEERC member. The SEERC Management Board is responsible for revision of these rules.

Rule 2 – Language
The official language of the SEERC is English.

Rule 3 – Conformity with CIGRE Statutes
The existence of SEERC, its mission and endeavors have no impact on the governance structure of CIGRE (National Committees, Administrative Council, and Steering Committee), nor does it introduce any hierarchical notion in relations with National Committees or Study Committees as stated in the Article 17 of the CIGRE Statutes.
The main objectives of SEERC follow the CIGRE Statutes i.e.:
- Contribute to the activities of the Study Committees, addressing and developing local issues,
- Organize Regional Meetings or other local meetings (Workshops, Colloquia…),
- Coordinate with industry organizations,
- Coordinate contributions to CIGRE main events (Session, Symposia) without impacting existing NC paper quotas,
- Encourage and provide an incentive to increase CIGRE membership and create new National Committees, by incorporating countries without a National Committee in the working structure,
- If previously agreed by the Management Board, coordination of the National Committees to nominate a member for election for the CIGRE Administrative Council and a likely candidate for the CIGRE Steering Committee.

Rule 4 – Application for Membership
The application for SEERC membership should be sent to the Chairman of SEERC with a reference document proving that the applicant has a National Committee fulfilling the requirements of CIGRE, which was officially recognized by the CIGRE Administrative Council. According to the CIGRE Rules of Procedure, this is a precondition for joining the Region (SEERC). The application of new members should be discussed by the Management Board and approved by majority vote.

Rule 5 – Management Board
Steering of SEERC activity and setting up the Rules of Operation is governed by the *Management Board (MB),* constituted from one representative (Chairpersons or appointed persons) of each SEERC member NC. The MB holds meetings as required, but at least once every year (including the conference meetings). MB members are nominated by the National Committees every two years one month before the MB meeting at the SEERC Conference. The nomination has to be confirmed by the MB. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, decisions are preferably reached by consensus, however, when failing that, decisions can be made by simple majority. Annually, the MB should forward a report to the CIGRE Administrative Council, outlining activities of the previous year and plans for the future.

Rule 6 – Management Board Meetings
The MB Meetings take place during the biennial SEERC Conference, the Paris Session in the same year and at least once a year. All MB members should attend the MB meetings. The MB Meetings shall be announced by the MB Chairperson or the appointed MB Secretary at least three months before being held. Information about the meeting, notably the Agenda, must be sent to all Invitees at least six weeks before the meeting. Minutes meetings should be normally sent to the participants within three weeks after the meeting. The Minutes should be brief and mainly include taken decisions. It is left to participants to record details.

Rule 7 – Chairperson of SEERC

The *Chairperson of SEERC* is either the Chairperson or a Nominee of a member National Committee and is elected by the Management Board meeting at the biennial SEERC Conference. During his/her mandate the Chairperson chairs the SEERC Conference and the Management Board. The duration of the chairperson's mandate is two years, starting and ending at the Management Board meeting at the biennial SEERC conference (one conference period).

Rule 8 – SEERC MB Secretary

The MB Chairperson is responsible for organizing MB meetings and may appoint a *SEERC MB Secretary* to carry out practical matters. The tasks of the SEERC MB Secretary are:

- Management of the SEERC website and its contents,
- Organizing MB meetings of SEERC,
- Issuing the MB meeting agenda and other related material prior to meetings,
- Drafting Minutes of MB meetings,
- Communicating with CIGRE's Central Office and taking care of MB's administrative matters,

To ensure smooth continuity, the new SEERC MB secretary should be appointed by the NC Chairperson before taking over the chairmanship.

Rule 9 – Technical Advisory Committee

The *Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)*, whose members are appointed by the NCs, manages and coordinates technical activities specific to the Region (Working Groups, etc.) as well as the management of conference abstracts and papers and the reviewing process. Consequently, it is essential that the TAC is capable to perform these tasks and is fully aware of the SEERC Guidelines of Conferences (chapter V).

All members of the TAC must approve their membership. Members of the TAC shall cover the entire scope of SEERC activities (including conference topics). Each National Committee of the SEERC members can nominate up to three TAC members. This should be done every two years one month before the MB meeting at the SEERC Conference. The nomination has to be confirmed by the MB.

The TAC Chairman is nominated and elected by the Management Board with a mandate for two years, starting and ending at the Management Board meeting at the biennial SEERC conference (one conference period). The TAC Chairman can be re-elected for a second mandate at most.

Technical issues specific to the Region should preferentially be raised with the respective Study Committee Chairperson, if possible through a Study Committee member from the Region. The TAC should hold meetings at least once a year and keeps the Chairperson of the CIGRE Technical Council informed about decided actions.

Rule 10 – Technical Advisory Committee Meetings

Apart from the yearly TAC meeting, meetings can be requested by any SEERC member NC. Such a request should be sent to the TAC Chairman with the motivation for the meeting and a suggested agenda. Meetings shall be announced at least two months before being held. Information for the meeting, notably the Agenda, must be sent to TAC members no later than six weeks before the meeting. Minutes of TAC meetings should be normally sent to the participants within three weeks after the meeting. The Minutes should be brief and mainly include taken decisions. It is left to participants to record details.

Rule 11 – SEERC Working Groups

Aiming to foster and support an efficient analysis of a specific technical problem arising within the Region and/or to suggest a particular method, equipment or tool, the SEERC MB in coordination with CIGRE Study Committee members of SEERC-members can establish a Regional Working Group (RWG).

Technical issues specific to the Region should preferably be raised with the respective CIGRE Study Committee Chairperson, if possible through a Study Committee member from a SEERC-member. The CIGRE Study Committee Chairperson will suggest appropriate action, keeping informed the Chairperson of the CIGRE Technical Council.

Rule 12 – Compliance

All members of SEERC must comply with the *Compliance Guide of CIGRE*. A fixed point is added to all agendas and minutes to note that all attendees agreed to the rules.

Rule 13 – Website and Information Exchange

To enhance and simplify information exchange between region members and to provide information for interested external parties, the chairperson (or the appointed secretary) of SEERC is responsible for maintaining the SEERC website. The information provided on the website should comply with the *Compliance Guide of CIGRE*.

The website should provide up-to-date information about SEERC related topics:

- Current SEERC member NCs,
- Key persons of SEERC (including chairman, MB, TAC),
- Official documents (e.g. Rules of Operation, Position Paper, Guidelines, etc.)
- Working Groups members of the region,
- Results of the SEERC Questionnaire,
- Current activities of potential interest to SEERC members,
- Conference Management: call for papers, abstract/paper submission

Keep in mind that some information might contain sensitive data (according to the *European General Data Protection Regulation* and the *Compliance Guide of CIGRE*) and should only be shared with SEERC members in a designated member area.

Besides, the website responsible should:

- Use CIGRE infrastructure when possible ,
- Use CIGRE KMS as member area (for Minutes of Meetings and internal documents),
- Make sure the website is up-to-date, attractive and in compliance with relevant standards (different browsers, responsive design, etc.),
- All payments through the website should use secure and up-to-date encryption,
- Use well-known and trusted organizations to ensure that the payments are safe (for both the website development and the merchant bank).

Rule 14 – SEERC Conference

The *SEERC Conference* is taking place biennially in the late springtime of the same year as the Paris Conference. The conference should take place for two days. The organization of the conference is the responsibility of the *Chairperson of SEERC*. The conference topics are determined by the MB and TAC during the first yearly meeting after the previous conference. The proposal for the call for papers is drafted by the TAC, approved by the MB and published at least one year before the date of the conference. Members of SEERC must not organize a conference having the same title or clearly inducing for being a SEERC Conference.

V.   Guidelines for the SEERC Conference

The venue is essential to the success of the meeting and should:
- be attractive to the participants,
- have sufficient facilities for the intended number of attendees ,
- have places/rooms to network,
- be well reachable: both the city (airport) and the distance from nearby hotels to the venue ,
- have Wi-Fi availability ,
- have adequate multimedia facilities and technical support,

Conference Tools

A variety of tools exist to organize conferences, and should be preferably used.
These tools differ in functionality, enabling:
- registration (including the number of payment options) ,
- paper submission,
- website content management,
- producing procedures,
- configurability,
- support

Conference Proceedings

The full set of papers ("The Proceedings") is compiled before the conference and distributed in digital version prior/after (to decide) the Conference to all registered participants and (if agreed within MB) in limited number to the SEERC members NCs. The TAC chairmanship shall endeavor to provide for publication of outstanding papers in the CIGRE Science & Engineering journal.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship from industry (or other organizations) might influence the financial outcome of the conference significantly. It is necessary to communicate clearly what the sponsoring party can expect and what the price and value is. To get best results, a designated contact person of the sponsors should be assigned. Sponsorship should not decrease the technical quality of the conference.

Reviewer Guidelines
- A guideline regarding the reviewing process (abstracts review, full paper review, options to resubmit...) shall be provided before the reviewing process by the TAC.
- If Authors will be late, the reviewers will be late as well. Plausible delays should be accounted in planning.
- The reviewer guidelines should account for selection of the main items to pay attention to and the reviewer profile (e.g. academic background, industry experience, …)
- The reviewer guidelines should include the number of reviews per paper.
- If possible, assign papers according to the reviewer competences or preferences (e.g. allow for paper bidding if available in the selected tool)
- Use the available tools to manage papers and communication with reviewers and Authors

Conference papers and program
- Depending on room availability, expectations and actual paper submissions, the number of approved papers has to be defined
- The TAC can decide to include one or more papers of each SEERC member in the conference program for presentation to achieve a better balanced presence of all SEERC members.
- The TAC decides for every approved paper, if it should be presented with a presentation or with a poster. For every approved abstract a full paper must be written.

- If poster and paper, what is the basis for the distinction (topic, reviewer score...)
- Make sure all presentations (and posters) have sufficient possible visibility
- Assign rooms and sessions well in advance and preferably same topic in a single session
- When one topic covers multiple sessions, have them not in parallel sessions (but maybe in the same room)
- Foresee time for questions and switching of the authors
- Presentations can be sent in advance, but usually they need to be uploaded at the spot (latest version). (note: using drop box might allow you to centrally manage all presentations)
- Assign a chair (and co-chair) of the session and provide him/her with instructions
- Clearly communicate what the expectations are towards the authors: Duration (presentation + questions)
- Format (e.g. size of the poster)

Keynotes (Invited Lectures)
- Keynotes are an essential part of the success of a conference
- Contact keynote speakers well in advance
- Identify the correct person to approach keynote speakers