



University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

Memorandum to: Members of the Executive Committee

From: Louis R. Charpentier
Secretary of the Governing Council

Date: December 2, 2002

Re: **Video Recording and Broadcasting of Governing Council Meetings**

In follow-up to the last meeting of the Governing Council, it was suggested that I prepare a memorandum to clarify for members the decisions related to the use of video cameras in Governing Council meetings.

The use of a video recorder during voting would be inconsistent with the procedure for recording votes as defined in By-law Number 2. Section 74 specifies the following condition to record votes: "If, prior to the time when the Chair has undertaken to determine the vote, any three members require that a count of the votes be recorded, then the number of votes for and against the question shall be counted and this count recorded in the minutes of the meeting." The intent of this provision is to communicate in the official record – the minutes of the meeting – the extent of support for a resolution, not to identify how particular individuals voted. Videotaping of voting without fulfilling this condition would clearly not respect the rules of order approved by the Governing Council.

The Chair of the Governing Council has the authority, however, to make decisions with respect to the conduct of meetings (By-law Number 2, Section 47) and provisions could be made to work within this constraint. Exercising this authority, the Chair could determine that video cameras be permitted in meetings and the conditions under which they were to be used. For example, during voting, cameras would be focussed only on the Chair and not on members in the process of voting. Enforcing such a condition, however, would likely be practical only if the recording were an official one being done by a staff member assigned to the task. If, in the judgement of the Chair, video recording or broadcasting of a particular meeting of the Governing Council were warranted, then arrangements would be made through the secretariat. External cameras would not be permitted.

In the last year, the question of permitting video recording and broadcasting has been raised and discussed at the Executive Committee (March 25, 2002; September 11, 2002). While the Chair has the authority to rule on the matter, the Executive Committee was consulted and it was agreed that official video recording and broadcasting could be permitted. If the Chair, after consultation with the Executive Committee, felt that it was appropriate for a given meeting, video and / or web broadcasting would be permitted. Arrangements would be made through the Office of the Governing Council.

The Chair, supported by the Executive Committee, made a ruling which is consistent with the rules of order approved by the Governing Council. Any further consideration of the matter would then appropriately fall to the Governing Council and could be placed on the agenda with a notice of motion. At the Council's last meeting, however, a motion was made asking that the Governing Council reconsider the decision disallowing video cameras. The motion was defeated. With this decision, the Governing Council has dealt with the matter, which may not be reconsidered within twelve months (barring a resolution supported by two-thirds of members to reconsider).