(c) Where the competent authorities of the Contracting States agree that a person directly affected by the case has failed to provide in a timely manner any additional material information requested by either competent authority after the start of the period provided in subparagraph (b) of paragraph 5, that period shall be extended for an amount of time equal to the period beginning on the date by which the information was requested and ending on the date on which that information was provided.

7. (a) The following rules shall govern the appointment of arbitrators:

(i) An arbitration panel shall consist of three individual arbitrators with expertise or experience in international tax matters.

(ii) Each of the competent authorities of the Contracting States shall appoint one arbitrator. The two arbitrators so appointed shall appoint the third arbitrator who shall serve as Chair of the arbitration panel. The Chair shall not be a national or resident of either Contracting State.

(iii) Each arbitrator appointed to the arbitration panel must be impartial and independent of the competent authorities, tax administrations, and ministries of finance of the Contracting States and of all persons directly affected by the case (as well as their advisors) at the time of accepting an appointment, maintain his or her impartiality and independence throughout the arbitration proceedings, and avoid any conduct for a reasonable period of time thereafter which may damage the appearance of impartiality and independence of the arbitrators with respect to the arbitration proceedings.

(b) The competent authorities of the Contracting States shall ensure that arbitrators and their staff agree in writing, prior to their acting in the arbitration proceedings, to treat any information relating to the arbitration proceedings consistently with the confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations provided for in paragraph 2 of Article 25 and the applicable laws of the Contracting States.

(c) Solely for the purposes of the application of the provisions of this Article and Article 25 and of the domestic laws of the Contracting States related to the exchange of information, confidentiality, and administrative assistance, arbitrators and a maximum of three staff per arbitrator (and prospective arbitrators solely to the extent necessary to verify their ability to fulfil the requirements of arbitrators) shall be considered to be persons or authorities to whom information may be disclosed. Information received by the arbitration panel or prospective arbitrators and information that the competent authorities of the Contracting States receive from the arbitration panel shall be considered information that is exchanged under the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 25.

8. (a) An arbitration decision shall be final.

(b) The arbitration decision shall not be binding on both Contracting States, if a final decision of the courts of one of the Contracting States holds that the arbitration decision is invalid. In such a case, the request for arbitration under paragraph 5 shall be considered not to have been made, and the arbitration proceedings shall be considered not to have taken place (except for the purposes of subparagraphs (b) and (c) of paragraph 7, and paragraph 11). In such a case, a new request for arbitration may be made unless the competent authorities agree that such a new request should not be permitted.

(c) An arbitration decision shall have no precedential value.

9. (a) If a person directly affected by the case does not accept the mutual agreement that implements the arbitration decision, the case shall not be eligible for any further consideration by the competent authorities of the Contracting States.