

Report of the additional virtual resumed session of the 59th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Tuesday 21 June 2022

13:00 – 13:30 Plenary Session of the Standing Committee

1. The Chair of the Standing Committee opened the session and, at his request, the Secretariat confirmed that the present members constituted a quorum.
2. China reported that the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14) would take place from 5 to 13 November 2022, as a hybrid meeting held in Wuhan, China and in Geneva, Switzerland. China would cover the costs related to both of the venues. This was the final decision, with the hybrid modality being the best solution to meet the needs of all parties. China thanked the Standing Committee and its Chair, the Secretary General and the Secretariat, and the Government of Switzerland for its support, which included enabling the rent-free use of the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG). This solution would enable a successful, inclusive, ambitious and practical COP14 meeting.
3. The Secretary General thanked the Chair of the Standing Committee and the delegations of China and Switzerland for their work in enabling this solution. She confirmed that the Secretariat had visited the CICG venue and was working to make the necessary arrangements. It was also working with China to review the memorandum of understanding, and will engage with Switzerland regarding visas and any other relevant matters. In the discussions with China, it had been clarified that the hybrid modality would entail the opening event, a high-level segment, some side events and the China wetlands exhibition being managed virtually in Wuhan, with negotiations and other aspects of COP14 taking place face to face in Geneva.
4. Switzerland thanked the delegation of China and looked forward to further collaboration in the organization of COP14.
5. Sweden invited the Standing Committee and especially its Subgroup on COP14 to consider if the 60th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC60) could be held at the Secretariat headquarters in Gland on 4 November, to minimize the pressure on the limited available time at the COP venue.
6. On the question from Mauritius regarding the hybrid modality, the Chair clarified that virtual access will be limited to participants in the venue in Wuhan.
7. Interventions were made by Belgium, Mauritius, Sweden and Switzerland.

Decision SC59/2022/2-01: The Standing Committee decided to hold COP14 between 5 and 13 November 2022, in a hybrid manner in Wuhan (China) at East Lake International Conference Center (ELICC) and Geneva (Switzerland) at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG). China will cover the costs for the two venues.

Decision SC59/2022/2-02: The Standing Committee requested China as the Host of COP14, the Subgroup on COP14 of the Standing Committee and the Secretariat to expedite the preparatory process and further requested the Secretariat to play a proactive role in coordination with and arrangement of activities at CICG, in consultation with China.

Any other business

8. The Secretary General, in response to enquiries on the final report of the resumed session of SC59, confirmed it would be sent shortly to Standing Committee members and then to all Parties.
9. On the question of a Party on the potential costs of hosting COP15, the Secretariat noted that subsequent to COP14 requirements for COPs and costs could be shared with interested Parties on request.
10. The Chair of the Standing Committee informed participants that, given that the current Secretary General will be moving on at the end of her second term and that there will be a gap until the process of recruitment of the next Secretary General is completed, the selection committee had identified Mr Jonathan Barzdo who would take up the role of Interim Secretary General.
11. Regarding dates, the Secretary General informed participants that as her end of term was on 21 August and that she was taking remaining leave days, her last day in the office would be 29 July and Mr Barzdo would start on 2 August 2022.
12. The Chair thanked participants and the Secretariat and closed the meeting.