

Ref.: COP16/2024/GEN

## NOTE VERBALE

The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has the pleasure to inform country Parties that the **sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16)** to the UNCCD will take place in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia **from 2 to 13 December 2024**. In coordination with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia holding the incoming COP Presidency, the secretariat has the distinct honour to invite the Government of your country to participate in COP16.

The UNCCD is a unique multilateral platform where governments, businesses and civil society come together to address present-day challenges to a sustainable future, including the need to reverse land degradation and enhance drought resilience. COP16 is expected to be the largest-ever meeting of UNCCD's 197 Parties and the first COP to be held in the Middle East region occurring in the same year as the UNCCD's 30th anniversary.

At the invitation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a **Leaders Summit**, is expected to be held during the first week of the COP with participation of Head of States, CEOs, and other global leaders to address the global challenges by identifying solutions to combat desertification, land degradation, and drought (DLDD).

To this end, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is working closely with the secretariat and numerous partners to deliver an ambitious Action Agenda that will include thematic days to raise awareness on the potential of transformative solutions:

1. Land Day (including Nature, Restoration, private sector engagement, business for land forum)
2. Resilience Day (including Drought and Water Scarcity, Sand and Dust Storms)
3. Food Systems Day (including regenerative agriculture, food security, nutrition)
4. Peoples Day (including Youth and Gender Caucus, IPLCs engagement)
5. Governance Day (including land tenure, land use planning and inclusion of Subnational Governments)
6. Finance Day (including mobilization of public and private resources, IFIS, Investments Funds).
7. Science, Technology, and Innovation Day (including science and academia engagement, state of the art technology and innovations for land restoration and drought resilience)

Additional details, including the programme of work for the Action Agenda and the dates for the thematic days, will be available soon at <https://www.unccd.int/cop16>. Parties and observers to the UNCCD that are interested in having pavilions in the blue zone are encouraged to contact: [cop16.bluezone@mwan.gov.sa](mailto:cop16.bluezone@mwan.gov.sa). For more information about the host country and information about pavilions in the green zone, please visit <https://www.unccdcop16.org/>

In order to ensure the full participation of all relevant stakeholders, the secretariat would be most grateful if your government would kindly nominate your delegates for COP16 at your earliest convenience. For eligible countries, and subject to availability of resources, the secretariat is striving to cover the travel expenses of 3 delegates: the national focal point of the Convention, the Science and Technology correspondent if one has been nominated and one representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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The secretariat and the incoming presidency recognize the importance of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, and welcomes the inclusion of representatives of youth, women, and civil society organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, private sector, academia, local governments, among others, as part of your delegation.

All country delegations and observers interested in participating in the Blue Zone activities must be accredited by the secretariat well in advance of the COP.

**Online registration will be available beginning on 15 July 2024 at the following link:**  
<https://www.unccd.int/cop16/registration> .

The official schedule of work including meetings of the COP subsidiary bodies namely: the sixteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST16), the twenty-second session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC22) and the Committee of the Whole (CoW) will be available upon finalization of the provisional agenda. The schedule of work, provisional agenda and the "Information for participants" (ICCD/COP(16)/INF.1) document will be made available at <https://www.unccd.int/cop16/official-documents> as well as on the UNCCD Conference app when it becomes operational.

**In preparation of COP 16, regional meetings** of affected country Parties of the Convention's regional implementation annexes for Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Mediterranean, and Central and Eastern Europe will be organized over the months of September and October, the exact dates of which will be announced later alongside further information on these meetings.

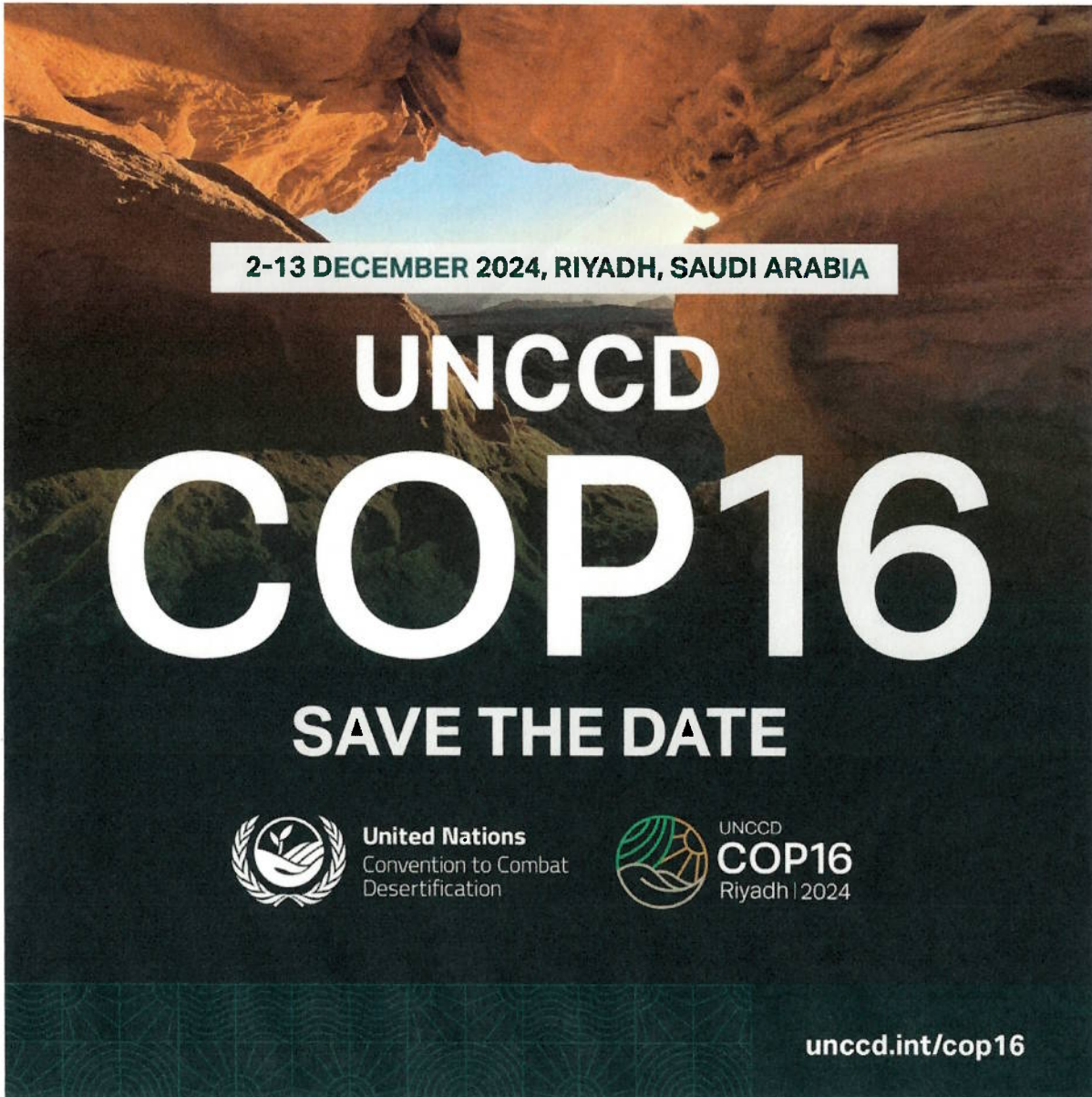
The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification avails itself of this opportunity to reaffirm to the diplomatic missions the assurances of its highest consideration.

Bonn, 8 April 2024



Distribution:

To country Parties and observers to the United Nations Convention on Combat Desertification through their national focal points and diplomatic missions



2-13 DECEMBER 2024, RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

UNCCD  
**COP16**

SAVE THE DATE



**United Nations**  
Convention to Combat  
Desertification



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Riyadh | 2024

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