



Ref.: COP17/2026/GEN

NOTE VERBALE

The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) presents its compliments to the Embassy of (*Party*) and has the honour to inform that the **seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17), the twenty-fourth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC24) and the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST17)** to the UNCCD will take place in **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from 17 to 28 August 2026**. The secretariat of the UNCCD has the honour to invite the Government of your country to participate in COP17 under the overarching theme “*Restoring Land, Restoring Hope*”.

Regional in person consultations 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 European country Parties in preparation to COP17 will be convened in Ulaanbaatar prior to the session from **15 to 16 August 2026**, at the **COP17 venue**. **Regional virtual consultations meetings** will be implemented from 26 March until 9 July 2026.

During the initial segment, from 17 to 21 August, in addition to the CST17 and CRIC24 sessions, the Committee of the Whole (COW) would initiate its work. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the civil society input in the deliberations of the COP, two half-days of open dialogue sessions have been planned on 20 August in the morning and 24 August in the afternoon. Also, in line with decision 36/COP.16 paragraph 2 and further to the request in decision 25/COP.16 paragraph 8, the convening of the Gender Caucus and other mandated events are included in programme of work.

The **High-Level Segment** will take place during the second week of the COP, starting with a **Heads of States Summit** that will be organized by the Government of Mongolia on **23 August**. The ministerial segment will follow, including ministerial dialogues and high-level special events that will be organized under thematic days, starting on August Monday 24 with Finance Day, Tuesday 25 with Water Day, Wednesday 26 Land and People Day, Thursday 27 Food Systems and Soil Health Day. During these days the agenda includes among others the following official events: on Monday (a) Ministerial Dialogue on innovative financial mechanisms for healthy land and drought resilience, and (b) the Business for Land Forum; on Tuesday (c) Ministerial Dialogue on accelerating drought resilience, (d) Special High Level event on Sand and Dust Storms; on Wednesday (e) Ministerial Dialogue on the Restoration of Rangelands and the well-being of Pastoralists’ Communities, (f) Youth Forum, (g) Gender Caucus, (h) Special Event on Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Caucuses; on Thursday (i) Special Ministerial and High-Level event on Food Systems and Soil Health.

During the thematic days, other high-level meetings, forums and side events will take place as part of an ambitious Riyadh-Ulaanbaatar Action Agenda for COP17, which is conceived as a platform to accelerate action and showcase solutions, innovations on finance, policy, coalitions, partnerships, technologies, operations in value chains to restore degraded land, manage and protect water, proactively manage drought, support food security, and build resilience economies and societies. The events will include the participation of political leaders, country delegates, representatives of financial institutions, CEO’s, mayors, academia, civil society organizations, parliamentarians, indigenous and local communities. Specific information about the thematic days and the events will be uploaded at <https://www.unccd.int/cop17>.

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During the concluding segment, the COP will consider all decisions not previously adopted. It will decide inter alia on the programme of work and date and venue of the eighteenth session of the COP and of the twenty-fifth session of the CRIC and any further decision on the matter taken during the current session.

The secretariat and the incoming COP 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.

In order to assist delegations in preparing for the conference, a provisional agenda and relevant documents for the session will be made available on the UNCCD website¹. All relevant information for participation at COP17 will be made available on the UNCCD COP17 webpage at the following link: <https://www.unccd.int/cop17/participate> and on the host country COP17 website: <https://unccdcop17.org/>.

It is requested that representatives of Parties to the Convention be provided with full powers to participate in the session, including the possibility to serve as officers of COP17 and its subsidiary bodies, and of any sessional committees, working groups or subsidiary bodies, established by the Conference.

The secretariat of the UNCCD would like to remind that, in accordance with Rule 19 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, the credentials of delegations shall be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs or, in the case of a regional economic integration organization, by the competent authority of that organization. Parties are kindly requested to observe this requirement.

It is brought to the attention of States that are not Parties at the time of COP17 that, in accordance with article 22, paragraph 7 of the Convention and rule 7 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, any body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which is qualified in matters covered by the Convention and which has informed the Permanent Secretariat of its wish to be represented at a session of the Conference of the Parties as an observer may be so admitted unless at least one third of the Parties present at the session object.

Please also note that COP17 will be a paperless session. Accordingly, official pre-session documents for COP17/CRIC24/CST17 sessions will be made available on the UNCCD website and the UNCCD Conference app. Official documents prepared in session will also be posted on the website and the Conference app. Limited quantities may be printed on site on demand only.

The secretariat would be grateful if the Government of your country would kindly nominate the representative(s) who will attend COP17. Online registration will be available from **1 May 2026** on this link: <https://indico.un.org/e/unccd-cop17>. All participants are required to upload an official nomination letter confirming their capacity to attend the COP17 session. For more information on the online registration, please refer to the UNCCD COP17 webpage.

The secretariat would like to draw your attention that participants are responsible for getting their own visas, hotel reservations and any type of health or other insurance they may need. While the secretariat will assist with the issuance of Note Verbale, participants requiring visas must therefore obtain these from the Embassies or Consulates of Mongolia in their country or through electronic means, before their departure to Ulaanbaatar.

The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Embassy of (*Party*), the assurances of its highest consideration.

Bonn, 27 March 2026

[Signed and stamped]

¹ Please check the following link: <https://www.unccd.int/cop17/official-documents>