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Agenda item 7
Programme and budget for the biennium 2027–2028

Updated financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention secretariat

Draft decision submitted by the Chair of the Committee of the Whole

The Conference of the Parties,

Considering the provisions of the Convention, particularly article 22, paragraph 2 (e), stating that the Conference of the Parties shall adopt, at its first session, financial rules for itself and any subsidiary bodies,

Recalling decision 2/COP.1, by which Parties adopted the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention secretariat,

Also recalling decisions 10/COP.13, 10/COP.14 and 10/COP.15, by which the financial rules were modified, as well as decisions 23/COP.7 and 3/COP.8, by which developments relevant to the financial rules were presented,

Further recalling decision 10/COP.16, by which the COP requested the Executive Secretary to carry out a review of the financial rules, with a view to identifying any need for updates deriving from (a) the development of the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules and related policies since the adoption of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties; (b) proposed modifications needed for an effective integrated budget approach; and (c) options for approaches concerning the payment of contributions for those countries whose financial year does not correspond with the deadline of 1 January; and to present a draft revised set of financial rules of the Conference of the Parties for consideration at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Having reviewed document ICCD/COP(17)/7,

Decides to adopt the updated financial rules, as contained in the annex to this decision.

Annex

Financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies, the Convention secretariat and the Global Mechanism

1. These financial rules govern the financial administration of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (UNCCD), its subsidiary bodies, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM), and are based on and consistent with the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules.

2. On matters not specifically covered herein, the appropriate United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules apply.

3. The UNCCD financial period is a biennium consisting of two consecutive calendar years, unless decided otherwise by the COP.

4. On an extraordinary basis, where significant, unexpected new needs arise that cannot be fully met from approved appropriations, and within a 20 per cent transfer limit between appropriation lines, the Executive Secretary shall consult with the COP Bureau for an interim solution in view of the adoption of decision(s) by the Parties at the next COP.

5. The Executive Secretary shall prepare and present to the COP an integrated, results-oriented programme budget for each budget period, covering the secretariat and the GM, consistent with COP mandates. The budget shall be prepared and approved in euros.

6. The proposed programme budget is transmitted to all Parties no later than 90 days before the opening of the session of the COP at which the budget is to be adopted.

7. After considering the programme budget proposal of the Executive Secretary, the COP adopts a core budget by consensus. The budget shall be adopted prior to the commencement of the financial period that it covers.

8. Adoption of the core budget by the COP authorizes the Executive Secretary to incur obligations and make payments for the purposes for which the appropriations were approved and up to the amounts so approved, provided that, unless specifically authorized by the COP, commitments are covered by related income.

9. The Executive Secretary may make transfers between each of the main appropriation lines, up to an aggregate limit of 20 per cent of the total estimated expenditure for those appropriation lines, provided that a further limitation of up to minus 25 per cent of each such appropriation line shall apply. Any such transfers shall be in line with the objectives of the Convention and COP decisions. The Executive Secretary shall report to the COP on any such transfers.

10. A General Fund for the Convention is established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and managed by the Executive Secretary. Contributions made pursuant to paragraph 15 (a) below, along with any additional contributions to offset core budget expenditures that are made pursuant to paragraph 15 (b) below by the Government hosting the Convention secretariat, and pursuant to paragraph 15 (c) below by the United Nations, shall be credited to the General Fund. All core budget expenditures made pursuant to paragraph 8 above shall be charged to the General Fund.

11. Within the General Fund, a working capital reserve is established at a level determined by the COP to ensure liquidity in the event of a temporary shortfall of cash. Drawdowns from the working capital reserve shall be restored from contributions and/or other available cash resources from the core budget, including unspent balances, contributions from previous financial periods and miscellaneous income, at the earliest opportunity.

12. A Supplementary Fund is established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and managed by the Executive Secretary. The Supplementary Fund shall receive contributions pursuant to paragraphs 15 (b) and (c) below, other than those specified in

paragraph 10 above and paragraph 13 below, including contributions earmarked, in accordance with paragraph 18 below, for:

(a) Support for the participation of some representatives of non-governmental organizations from affected developing country Parties, particularly the least developed among them, in sessions of the COP;

(b) The facilitation of assistance to affected developing countries in accordance with article 23, paragraph 2 (c), and article 26, paragraph 7, of the Convention;

(c) Other appropriate purposes consistent with the objectives of the Convention.

13. A Special Fund is established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and managed by the Executive Secretary. The Special Fund shall receive contributions to support the participation of representatives of affected developing and, in particular, least developed country Parties, particularly those in Africa, in the sessions of the COP and its subsidiary bodies.

14. In the event that the COP decides to terminate a fund established pursuant to the present rules, it shall so advise the Secretary-General of the United Nations at least six months before the date of termination so decided. For the General Trust Fund, the COP shall decide, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, on the distribution of any uncommitted balances after all liquidation expenses have been met. For other trust funds, such decisions shall be agreed between the Executive Secretary and the contributors to those funds.

15. The resources of the COP shall comprise:

(a) Contributions made each year by Parties according to the indicative scale adopted by consensus by the COP, and based on the most recent scale of assessments of the United Nations, as may be adopted by the General Assembly;

(b) Other contributions made by Parties in addition to those made pursuant to subparagraph 15 (a) above;

(c) Contributions from States not party to the Convention, as well as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other sources;

(d) The uncommitted balance of appropriations from previous financial periods attributed to the fund concerned;

(e) Miscellaneous income attributed to the fund concerned.

16. The COP shall, in adopting the indicative scale of contributions referred to in paragraph 15 (a) above, make adjustments to take account of contributions from Parties which are not members of the United Nations, as well as those of regional economic integration organizations that are Parties.

17. Prior to the beginning of each calendar year, the Executive Secretary shall notify each Party of the contribution it is required to pay. Contributions are expected to be paid in full within 30 days of receipt of the notification from the Executive Secretary, or on the first day of the calendar year to which they relate, whichever is later. The Executive Secretary shall keep track of and report annually to the COP on the status of outstanding contributions, including any drawdowns from the working capital reserve.

18. If the contributions of any Party have not been received after two or more years, the Executive Secretary shall jointly decide with any Party which has outstanding contributions to develop a payment schedule to permit the relevant Party to pay all outstanding contributions, depending on the financial circumstances of the Party, and to pay future contributions promptly. The Executive Secretary shall report to the Bureau and to the COP at their next meetings on progress under any such schedule. If a payment schedule is not agreed or respected, the COP will consider the matter.

19. Contributions other than those to the core budget shall be used in accordance with the terms and conditions agreed between the Executive Secretary and the contributor, consistent with the objectives of the Convention and in accordance with the financial rules and relevant decisions of the COP. Contributions referred to in paragraphs 15 (b) and (c) above may be

recorded in subaccounts within the relevant trust fund or special account, and their administration shall be reported separately to the COP.

20. Contributions made pursuant to paragraph 15 (a) above from States and regional economic integration organizations that become Parties to the Convention after the beginning of a financial period shall be made pro rata temporis for the balance of that financial period. Consequent adjustments shall be made at the end of each financial period for other Parties.

21. All contributions shall be paid in euros, United States dollars or equivalent in a convertible currency into a bank account to be designated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in consultation with the Executive Secretary. Where a Party has followed the applicable payment instructions, any difference due solely to charges levied by an intermediary or receiving bank shall not be recorded as outstanding contributions, and payment procedures shall be resolved by the Party in consultation with the secretariat, in accordance with the present financial rules.

22. The Executive Secretary shall promptly acknowledge all pledges and contributions and regularly inform the Parties on the status of payments to the core budget. At each COP, the Executive Secretary will also inform the Parties of the status of pledges and payments of contributions to other trust funds.

23. Contributions not immediately required shall be invested at the discretion of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in consultation with the head of the Convention secretariat. The resulting income shall be credited to the appropriate fund or funds referred to in paragraphs 10, 12 and 13 above.

24. The accounts and financial management of all funds governed by the present rules shall be subject to the internal and external audit process of the United Nations.

25. The United Nations shall provide Parties with an audited statement of accounts for each year of the financial period.

26. The COP, under such terms as may periodically be mutually agreed upon between itself and the United Nations, shall reimburse the United Nations from the funds referred to in paragraphs 10, 12 and 13, for the purposes of services rendered, including the administration of the relevant fund by the United Nations to the COP, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention secretariat.

27. Any amendment to the present rules shall be adopted by the COP by consensus.