

**Convention to Combat
Desertification**Distr.: General
28 April 2015

Original: English

Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention**Report of the thirteenth session of the Committee for the
Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held in
Bonn from 25 to 27 March 2015**

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Opening of the session	1–8	3
A. Opening statements.....	1–2	3
B. General statements.....	3–7	3
C. Meetings of the Regional Implementation Annexes.....	8	3
II. Procedural matters.....	9–19	3
A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.....	9–13	3
B. Appointment of a Rapporteur of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention	14	4
C. Informal consultations	15	4
D. Attendance	16–18	4
E. Documentation.....	19	6
III. Conclusions and recommendations	20–123	6
A. Assessment of implementation of the Convention.....	22–87	7
B. Review of financial support for the implementation of the Convention.....	88–105	13
C. Formulation, revision and implementation of action programmes in view of the post-2015 sustainable development framework.....	106–123	15

GE.15-08467 (E)



* 1 5 0 8 4 6 7 *

Please recycle



IV.	Conclusion of the session	124–130	17
A.	Adoption of the comprehensive report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to the Conference of the Parties, including conclusions and recommendations	124–126	17
B.	Closure of the session	127–130	17
Annexes			
I.	Documents before the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its eleventh session		18
II.	Statements made at the opening meeting of the thirteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, on 25 March 2015, by the Regional Implementation Annexes to the Convention and other regional and interest groups		19

I. Opening of the session

A. Opening statements

1. On 25 March 2015, the Chair of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), Mr. Philbert Brown (Jamaica), opened the thirteenth session of the Committee and made a statement.
2. A statement was made by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

B. General statements

3. Statements were made by the representatives of South Africa (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa (Annex I)), India (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Asia (Annex II)), Colombia (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Latin America and the Caribbean (Annex III)), Portugal (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for the Northern Mediterranean (Annex IV)) and Armenia (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V)).
4. A statement was also made by the representative of Latvia (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States).
5. At the request of the Committee, statements by the representatives of the Regional Implementation Annexes to the Convention and the European Union and its Member States are included in annex II to this report, in the language in which they were made.
6. A statement was also made by the representative of Forestry and Environmental Action on behalf of civil society organizations (CSOs).
7. A statement was also made by the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs of Turkey on behalf of the Host Country of the forthcoming twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties.

C. Meetings of the Regional Implementation Annexes

8. Meetings of the Regional Implementation Annexes in preparation for the thirteenth session of the CRIC were held from 23 to 24 March 2015.

II. Procedural matters

A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

9. At its first meeting, on 25 March 2015, the Committee adopted the provisional agenda as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(13)/1 and Corr.1. The agenda read as follows:
 1. Procedural matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work;
 - (b) Appointment of the Rapporteur of the Committee.

2. Assessment of implementation of the Convention:
 - (a) Advocacy, awareness-raising and education;
 - (b) Policy framework;
 - (c) Science, technology and knowledge;
 - (d) Capacity-building;
 - (e) Financing and technology transfer.
3. Review of financial support for the implementation of the Convention.
4. Formulation, revision and implementation of action programmes in view of the post-2015 sustainable development framework.
5. Adoption of the comprehensive report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to the Conference of the Parties, including conclusions and recommendations.

10. Before the adoption of the agenda, statements were made by the representatives of Colombia (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States), the United Republic of Tanzania (on behalf of the Group of African States), Swaziland, Namibia, Brazil, Argentina, Ireland, Austria and China, on non-paper 1 entitled "Consideration of best practices in the implementation of the Convention: accessibility of information on best practices" and non-paper 2 entitled "Additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist the Conference of the Parties in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention".

11. The representatives of the UNCCD secretariat responded.

12. Based on the statements mentioned above, the Committee invited Parties to provide feedback on non-paper 1 and non-paper 2 to the secretariat, including through their regional and interests groups, before 1 June 2015.

13. Also at the first meeting, the Committee approved the schedule of work for the session, as contained in annex II of document ICCD/CRIC(13)/1.

B. Appointment of a Rapporteur of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

14. At the first meeting, on 25 March 2015, the Committee appointed Mr. Yuriy Kolmaz (Ukraine) as Rapporteur of its thirteenth and fourteenth sessions.

C. Informal consultations

15. Informal consultations took place regularly during the session under the guidance of the Chair and the Rapporteur of the Committee.

D. Attendance

16. The representatives of the following 122 Parties to the UNCCD attended the thirteenth session of the Committee:

Algeria	France	Mauritania
Angola	Gabon	Mongolia
Argentina	Gambia	Morocco
Armenia	Georgia	Mozambique
Austria	Germany	Namibia
Azerbaijan	Ghana	Nepal
Belarus	Grenada	Niger
Belgium	Guatemala	Nigeria
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Guinea	Norway
Botswana	Guinea-Bissau	Oman
Brazil	Guyana	Pakistan
Burkina Faso	Hungary	Palau
Cambodia	India	Panama
Cameroon	Indonesia	Paraguay
Cape Verde	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Peru
Central African Republic	Iraq	Philippines
Chad	Ireland	Portugal
China	Italy	Republic of Korea
Colombia	Jamaica	Republic of Moldova
Comoros	Japan	Romania
Cook Islands	Kazakhstan	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Costa Rica	Kenya	Saint Lucia
Côte d'Ivoire	Kiribati	Samoa
Croatia	Kuwait	Sao Tome and Principe
Cuba	Kyrgyzstan	Saudi Arabia
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Senegal
Dominica	Latvia	Sierra Leone
Dominican Republic	Lebanon	South Africa
Ecuador	Lesotho	South Sudan (Republic of)
Egypt	Lithuania	Spain
Equatorial Guinea	Madagascar	Sri Lanka
Ethiopia	Malawi	Swaziland
European Union	Malaysia	Switzerland
Fiji	Mali	Syrian Arab Republic
Finland	Marshall Islands	Thailand
		Timor-Leste

Togo	Uganda	Uzbekistan
Tonga	Ukraine	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Trinidad and Tobago	United Arab Emirates	Viet Nam
Tunisia	United Republic of Tanzania	Zambia
Turkey	United States of America	
Turkmenistan	Uruguay	

17. The following United Nations organizations, offices and specialized agencies were also represented:

- Global Environment Facility
- International Atomic Energy Agency
- United Nations Environment Programme
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

18. The session was also attended by four intergovernmental organizations and 12 CSOs, including non-governmental organizations.

E. Documentation

19. The documentation submitted for the consideration of the Committee is listed in annex I to this report.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

20. According to decision 11/COP.9, containing the terms of reference of the CRIC, the Committee is to produce a final report on sessions held between ordinary sessions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) containing its recommendations on further steps to be taken to facilitate effective implementation of the Convention. With regard to the nature of the review process, the same decision provides that the review of implementation shall be an experience-sharing and lessons-learning exercise in an interactive format, which will identify successes, obstacles and difficulties with a view to improving the implementation of the Convention.

21. The conclusions and recommendations set out in this report are therefore a summary compilation of the recommendations listed in documents ICCD/CRIC(13)/2 and Corr.1, ICCD/CRIC(13)/3, ICCD/CRIC(13)/4, ICCD/CRIC(13)/5, ICCD/CRIC(13)/6/Rev.1, ICCD/CRIC(13)/7/Rev.1 and ICCD/CRIC(13)/8, some of which were amended by participants during the thirteenth session of the CRIC (CRIC 13). Other ideas, suggestions and proposals offered by participants in CRIC 13 to further the implementation of the Convention and the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy) are also presented in this document. This report lists potential action that could be undertaken by Parties and other stakeholders, including the institutions and subsidiary bodies of the Convention, after consideration and appropriate decisions by the COP, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.

A. Assessment of implementation of the Convention

1. Advocacy, awareness-raising and education

22. Those country Parties which reported a percentage of national awareness of desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) and its synergies that is lower than their national targets are invited to step up their efforts in communication and education in order to meet their targets, including through the mobilization of resources for capacity-building of social communicators such as the media, civil society organizations (CSOs), practitioners and social networks.

23. Parties are invited/encouraged to assess and increase the effectiveness of their advocacy activities and means of communication on DLDD-related issues through the use of various means, including internet-based tools and participatory approaches with a view to reaching and changing the behaviour/mentality/attitude of a wider audience.

24. Affected country Parties are encouraged/invited to continue monitoring the implementation of their national action programmes (NAPs) with regard to policy, measures and actions undertaken in the fields of advocacy, awareness-raising and education. Affected country Parties are also encouraged/invited, where appropriate, to use land degradation neutrality (LDN) as an additional term for advocacy, awareness-raising and educational purposes.

25. Affected country Parties are further invited to place DLDD in the formal national educational programmes of primary and secondary school to raise awareness on DLDD.

26. Developed country Parties, other governments, non-governmental organizations and financial institutions are invited to undertake specific actions in support of enabling affected country Parties to raise awareness on DLDD.

27. Affected country Parties are encouraged to enter into South-South and triangular cooperation to enhance their efforts in setting and achieving their national targets on advocacy, awareness-raising and education.

28. Parties were of the opinion that the national reports should be further improved with the aim of using them as effective tools for advocacy, awareness-raising and education.

29. Parties suggested using success stories for reporting on operational objective 1 rather than data that may be unreliable, particularly the total percentage of population informed about DLDD issues.

30. The Convention's institutions are requested, in their respective 2016–2017 work programmes, specific actions in support of enabling affected country Parties to raise awareness on DLDD, targeting those countries, subregions and regions which reported that they lacked relevant capacities and instruments in this regard. A more country-driven approach is suggested to permit affected country Parties to request support from relevant institutions. It is recommended that this approach be voluntary so as to enable flexibility for affected country Parties to specifically request the necessary assistance.

2. Policy framework

31. Affected country Parties are invited to continue their efforts to formulate/revise/align their NAPs in accordance with guidance from the COP so that the global target set by The Strategy can be achieved by the end of 2015, if possible, or by 2018 at the latest.

32. Affected country Parties that are still in the NAP alignment process are suggested to consider the future strategic orientation of the UNCCD, which is expected to be decided upon by the twelfth session of the COP, as guidance in this process.

33. Parties noted that only 20 per cent of Parties have so far aligned their NAPs with The Strategy and that The Strategy is only in effect for another two years. Therefore, they recommended that The Strategy should be revised and extended to cover the period 2016–2030 to be in line with the United Nations sustainable development goals, especially to incorporate new developments in processes relating to land degradation neutrality (LDN), adaptation to climate change and synergies in line with other Rio conventions and to establish new indicators. The alignment process should continue in line with The Strategy and be achieved by 2018. The alignment process should also include the subregional and regional strategies.

34. Parties requested the secretariat to: (a) invite affected country Parties which did not align their NAPs in accordance with The Strategy to identify the main reasons preventing them from doing so; and (b) prepare, based on the information received, a report which identifies the main difficulties faced by Parties and present possible options to overcome problems identified.

35. Parties proposed that the definition of LDN be applied to all territories and not to drylands only.

36. All Parties/developed country Parties, other governments and financial organizations, particularly the Global Environment Facility (GEF), are invited to (a) ensure the timeliness of financial and technical support; and (b) identify incentives/ways forward for the implementation of action programmes and give priority to activities included in aligned NAPs in their allocation and/or disbursement of resources.

37. Developed country Parties, countries in a position to do so/other governments and other development partners are invited to increase their support to the establishment of partnership agreements with affected country Parties according to their bilateral priorities, while giving special attention to the implementation of revised NAPs, and to assist them in monitoring progress towards achieving national targets.

38. The Global Mechanism (GM) is requested to compile information from the Unified Financial Annexes as contained in the reporting template for affected country Parties and developed country Parties, include the preliminary analysis/assessment of such information in its analysis of financial flows and advise on the relevance of such indicators and the utility to compile it in future reporting exercises.

39. The GM is also requested to identify and facilitate access to new funding opportunities to support NAP implementation, including through access to global and regional funds for sustainable development/rural development/environmental issues, building on synergies/linkages between desertification/land degradation, climate change and biodiversity.

40. The Convention's institutions are requested to include specific actions on facilitating the policy framework and resource mobilization in their respective 2016–2017 work programmes, targeting with priority those countries that have complied with the obligations set by the COP.

3. Science, technology and knowledge

41. Affected country Parties are invited to increase their efforts to develop, implement and maintain robust, functional and regularly updated monitoring systems, taking into consideration national circumstances and conditions, recover those systems which have been discontinued and eventually expand those systems that partially cover all DLDD issues in order to provide the required specific information.

42. The Regional Coordination Mechanisms are requested, with the support of the secretariat, to undertake an in-depth analysis of national, regional and global monitoring

systems, including on their scope, functionality and efficiency, with a view to making this information available, especially to those development partners that can contribute technically and financially to the development and maintenance of such capacities, including the private sector. Countries should have a national monitoring system in place so that they can provide information to the global monitoring system.

43. Parties are invited to share their experiences in designing and implementing their national monitoring systems. Developed country Parties and relevant financial and development institutions are invited to support this effort.

44. The secretariat is requested to support the creation of an enabling environment for affected country Parties to become a partner of global satellite monitoring networks and receive technology for data information processing and use.

45. Affected country Parties are invited to provide national information and technical advice on DLDD, with the assistance of the secretariat, with a view to making this information available to those development partners that can contribute technically and financially to the development and maintenance of monitoring systems, including the private sector.

46. Developed country Parties, countries in a position to do so/other governments, and relevant technical and financial organizations, including from the private sector, are invited to provide additional support to affected country Parties for the establishment and maintenance of national monitoring systems.

47. Recalling decision 22/COP.11, affected country Parties are invited to establish baselines and concrete targets within their NAPs, making use of scientific knowledge-based diagnostic tools at the national level at the request of the Parties.

48. Parties stated that the scientific contribution to the implementation of the UNCCD should focus on providing applied scientific solutions, traditional knowledge and innovative approaches and replicating successful sustainable land management practices at ground level in order to achieve concrete benefits for affected populations and ecosystems. Parties should also seek to share successful experiences, which can be adapted as necessary to the local needs of different countries. Developed country Parties, relevant financial and development institutions, and CSOs are invited to support this effort.

49. Affected country Parties and the secretariat are invited to enhance the efforts aimed at developing knowledge-sharing systems on DLDD issues.

50. The secretariat is requested to take additional measures to make the Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal functional.

51. Parties recommended that the LDN Project be scaled up and that sustainable development goals be taken into account in the NAP alignment process.

52. Parties emphasized the need to strengthen the roles of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and the Science-Policy Interface (SPI), as well as cooperation between scientists and policymakers.

53. Developed country Parties and multilateral agencies are invited to provide support to affected country Parties for capacity-building, including training and workshops and resource mobilization related to action programme alignment and implementation.

54. The Convention's institutions are requested to include, in their respective 2016–2017 work programmes, specific actions in support of enabling those affected country Parties which so request to assess and monitor DLDD, targeting those countries, subregions and regions which reported that they lacked relevant capacities and instruments in this regard.

4. Capacity-building

55. Developed country Parties and international organizations, including those of the United Nations system and the GEF, shall consider reviewing their capacity-building plans with a view to increasing such support on matters relating to DLDD in a more coordinated manner to avoid duplication and enhance the effective use of resources and taking into account the post-2015 development agenda.

56. Convention's institutions are requested to make available information on affected country Parties which, according to the 2014 reporting, need further capacity-building assistance, if the interested country Party does not oppose the disclosure of this information, with a view to the requests being considered by bilateral donors and multilateral agencies within the framework of possible projects and programmes.

57. Affected country Parties are encouraged to enter South-South and triangular cooperation to address issues regarding the lack of capacity required for effective implementation of the Convention.

58. The secretariat and the GM are invited to engage with developed country Parties to meet their commitments.

59. The Convention's institutions are requested to include specific actions on DLDD capacity-building in their respective 2016–2017 work programmes, targeting those countries, subregions and regions which reported that they lacked the capacities required for effective implementation of the Convention.

5. Financing and technology transfer

a. Integrated investment frameworks

60. Where appropriate, affected country Parties are urged to increase their efforts in establishing, maintaining and improving the efficiency of their integrated investment frameworks (IIFs) with the aim of achieving the 50 per cent target set out by The Strategy, taking into account a wider spectrum of funding resources by 2014. Developed country Parties, the GEF and other multilateral financial institutions are invited to intensify their efforts in supporting all regions in the establishment of IIFs for the forthcoming bienniums.

61. On the basis of the evaluation study on IIFs, the secretariat and the GM are requested to provide best practice guidelines on the development of IIFs to affected country Parties.

62. Importance should be placed not only on the establishment/development of IIFs, but also on maintaining and monitoring their efficiency. Affected country Parties are further requested to maintain the established IIFs and improve their efficiency.

63. It was noted with concern the increasing challenges of LDN and dwindling resources, and that a programmatic approach to this problem is necessary.

64. Developed country Parties, the GEF and other multilateral financial institutions are invited to intensify their efforts in supporting all regions in the establishment of IIFs, and specifically those that have expressed plans to establish IIFs for the forthcoming bienniums. Parties recognize that (a) there has been progress in establishing IIFs, (b) there should be a further call for both technical and financial support; and (c) all countries that have not yet developed IIFs should start doing it soon. However, financing is required to support activities such as restoring degraded lands, establishing baselines, identifying priorities, setting targets, building capacity for monitoring land degradation, and sharing of best practices.

65. The GM is requested to continue assisting affected country Parties and subregions in developing their IIFs as outlined above and in identifying innovative sources of funding, including new financial opportunities, instruments and mechanisms for this purpose.

66. The process of facilitating the establishment of the IIFs/integrated financing strategy (IFS) is too extensive for the GM to accomplish alone, and this is a reason for slow progress to date. It is recommended that other organizations implement IIFs, for example the United Nations Environment Programme or the United Nations Development Programme.

67. Mechanisms and approaches other than IIFs should be made available to galvanize funding in countries where IIFs may not be appropriate because of internal situations that are not conducive to them, or because they cannot be included in NAP development.

b. Amount of financial resources made available to combat desertification/land degradation and drought

68. The criteria used for funding allocation under the GEF's System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) continue to limit financing for land degradation compared to other thematic areas. Therefore, there is a need to clarify the elements of the criteria that limit the allocation of resources to the land degradation focal area in order to increase equity in the allocation of resources.

69. Parties requested the GEF to provide the criteria used for the allocation of funds to land degradation focal areas to the Parties to the UNCCD. Consistent equity in allocation is an area of concern and there is a need to review the quality of the criteria.

70. As a financial mechanism of the Convention, the GEF should put in place a multi-year funding programme towards allocating enough resources to reverse the cost of inaction on land degradation, which amounts to USD 66 billion annually (according to the International Food Policy Research Institute), in order to be able to implement the sustainable development goals (SDGs) that relate to sustainable land management and land degradation neutrality.

71. The GEF is requested to consider national needs assessments in stepping up its efforts for enhancing allocation for UNCCD-related activities during the next replenishment of the GEF.

72. It was noted that the GEF is not the only multilateral financial institution expected to support the activities of this Convention. Therefore, Parties requested to: (a) increase access to diversified funding sources (including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Adaptation Fund etc.) to increase land-based adaptation and mitigation; and (b) build the capacities of Parties to access funding from these new resources.

73. Parties requested the GEF to increase resources towards South-South cooperation.

74. Parties considered it important to raise awareness on the issue of GEF funding for Convention activities. Therefore, they stressed the need to include additional wording regarding land-based mitigation and adaptation in the 2015 negotiations of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris in order for Parties to be able to access GCF funding.

75. Parties noted that the GM provided training courses internationally, but expressed the need for the GM to focus more on on-the-ground projects.

c. Adequacy, timeliness and predictability of financial resources

76. Developed country Parties, other governments in a position to do so and multilateral institutions, particularly the GEF, are invited to continue to facilitate a sustained increase in

the adequacy, timeliness and predictability of the resources provided to affected country Parties and subregions in response to the considerations expressed by these Parties. Adequate support in this context should be extended to subregional organization to enable their member countries to build capacity as well as mainstream and facilitate subregional discussions. Parties recognized the inadequacy of the financing allocated for land-based investments.

77. Parties called on the GEF for increased financial support, more predictable resources, and new funding opportunities, particularly in the light of the new sustainable development goals.

d. Number of proposals related to desertification/land degradation and drought

78. Developed affected country Parties are invited to step up their efforts in financing projects and activities with internal resources. The use of external resources should be properly taken into account within the economic framework of their NAPs, for example those related to the European Union Rural Development Programme and other European Union Programmes.

79. Affected country Parties are invited to step up their efforts in submitting project proposals to multilateral financial institutions, facilities and funds, and to take advantage of support provided for this purpose, particularly (but not limited to) the resources allocated under the GEF and its STAR. In addition, Parties are encouraged to develop and submit proposals to other funding resources, including the GCF, the Investment Fund for Land Degradation Neutrality and the Adaptation Fund to finance land-based approaches towards mitigation and adaptation.

e. Access to technology

80. Parties stressed the importance of clarifying the concept of technology transfer for technologies related to DLDD.

81. Affected country Parties are invited to continue their ongoing efforts to facilitate access to technology transfer as is reflected in the 2014 reporting. In this context, some Parties invited developed country Parties and multilateral institutions, particularly the GEF, to support South-South initiatives at subregional, regional and interregional levels.

82. Affected country Parties are invited to continue their ongoing efforts to facilitate access to technology transfer as is reflected in the 2014 reporting. Some other Parties urged developed country Parties to take action to facilitate and finance technology transfer for affected country Parties under favourable conditions, including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed.

83. What is understood as technology transfer should not be limited to monitoring and reporting systems, but should also include practical technology innovations on the ground. The Convention puts too much focus on monitoring and reporting and not enough focus on work on the ground. Several novel technologies have been developed, including those from EMBRAPA (the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation). Solutions such as rainwater collection systems and underground water reservoirs are often inexpensive and not difficult to implement. These solutions are ignored by the Convention. Affected country Parties and developed country Parties are urged to increase technology transfer activities specifically.

84. Technology transfer must be further incorporated into countries' work; all progress achieved by countries in technology transfer should be recognized. Technology transfer should take place in circumstances that are conducive to the realization of the technologies, and countries should be able to own these technologies and adapt them.

85. Parties expressed the need to clarify for reporting purposes the definition of technology transfer and criteria for the identification of technologies related to DLDD.

86. The Convention's institutions are requested to include the consideration of these recommendations in their respective work programmes and plans that are to be put forward for discussion at COP 12 with a view to providing the required assistance to affected country Parties in relation to operational objective 5 of The Strategy.

87. The Convention's institutions are also requested to include, in their respective 2016–2017 work programmes, specific actions that are in accordance with the decisions taken by the COP and that target with priority issues that have emerged from the 2014 reporting exercise, such as NAP alignment and IIFs; monitoring systems specifically targeting DLDD; partnership agreements; and synergies between plans, programmes and actions at all levels between the three Rio conventions.

B. Review of financial support for the implementation of the Convention

88. Parties noted the need for the further simplification of reporting on financial flows and Unified Financial Annex to avoid duplication in the reporting from developed country Parties, affected country Parties and multilateral agencies. Thus the GM is requested to explore the options to provide default data on financial flows to the country for their verification.

89. Developed country Parties are urged to increase their reporting rates as an obligation under the Convention.

90. To ensure better data coverage and a more accurate analysis of financial flows, further efforts are required to strengthen synergies with other reporting initiatives, and equip/improve the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS) platform with data mining functionalities that enable current and historical data sets to be queried, as well as tools that allow the platform to systematically disaggregate the financial commitments between internal and external funding resources. The reporting format does not reflect that of national sectoral reports and therefore cannot inform the national system. Parties recognized the need to improve the PRAIS system to best reflect the relevant national reporting requirements.

91. The trend showing a steady level of nominal commitments and decreasing weighted commitments at global level requires urgent attention; specific actions may be required to address this negative trend. Developed country Parties and multilateral agencies are requested to strengthen their efforts in providing substantial financial resources and other forms of support to assist affected country Parties to combat DLDD.

92. The secretariat is requested to increase advocacy efforts to advance the objective of the UNCCD and increase its value addition with regard to the SDG framework in order to attract increased commitment at the global level.

93. The secretariat is also requested to undertake a study on the long-term global impact of non-action on land degradation, in particular on the NAPs, subregional action programmes (SRAPs) and regional action programmes (RAPs), in order to provide a future outlook and identify challenges that require increased global commitment to the UNCCD/DLDD.

94. The COP is called upon to further refine and focus UNCCD priorities, including clarity on targets at all levels, with a view to enhancing their relevance at the global level as a means to increase global commitment.

95. Parties requested that efforts be made at the Assembly of the GEF, including through regional meetings, to address the issue of unequal distribution of funds among the conventions. Also to be addressed is the issue of resources being allocated to land degradation projects from focal areas for other conventions.

96. The multi-purpose nature of an increasing share of UNCCD-related activities that simultaneously target climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and biodiversity objectives is encouraging. Efforts should be made at all levels to further recognize and harness synergies among the Rio conventions, particularly with regard to budgeting and project-level implementation. Soil forms the basis for achieving the objectives of the other conventions, and the focus should therefore be on land productivity to enhance synergies among the other Rio conventions.

97. Convention institutions and country Parties are invited to strengthen synergies between Rio conventions by improving communication between focal points of the other Rio conventions. The secretariats of other Rio conventions are invited to explore options to strengthen synergies, particularly at budget-level and project-level. The GM is requested to undertake capacity-building workshops to ensure eligible affected country Parties take full advantage of new and innovative funding under the various conventions and protocols (e.g. GCF, Adaptation Fund) to develop synergized projects.

98. Financial flows involving innovative funding sources are still underrepresented compared with traditional funding sources. More specific actions should be taken to support resource mobilization from innovative funding sources including the private sector, in financing UNCCD implementation, in line with decision 14/COP.11. In this regard developed country Parties are invited to increase their total nominal commitment towards financing activities implemented by affected country Parties. In pursuit of this objective, there is a need for the dissemination of the various financial models and frameworks available which address the interests of all concerned stakeholders in an equitable manner. While recognizing the value of public-private partnerships, the need to look at equity and fairness to all stakeholders when pursuing these partnerships is emphasized. A workshop was suggested on various public-private financial models, including frameworks for public-private partnership and ensuring that all countries are equally represented.

99. Parties, recalling article 6 of the Convention, noted that obligations of developed country Parties “actively support, as agreed, individually or jointly, the efforts of affected developing country Parties, particularly those in Africa, and the least developed countries, to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;” are not being met. The main problem of resources not forthcoming to properly implement the Convention might not be properly addressed by the LDN approach.

100. Developed country Parties are encouraged to accompany their strong demands with corresponding resources regarding the implementation of sustainable land management practices.

101. The GM is invited to continue its efforts to facilitate access to information for affected country Parties on how to access funds based on the conditions in each region.

102. More financial resources and sharing of best practices are needed in order to improve the overall implementation of the Convention.

103. The secretariat is requested to undertake a study of the financial resources needed by the African country Parties and other developing country Parties to implement the envisaged strategies. The Group of African States envisions that, a new strategy will be needed leading up to 2030, and should preferably be completed by 2016. Developed country Parties are encouraged to make contributions towards the development of this study.

104. In developing countries, the private sector is not in a position to play a meaningful role. More efforts should be made to increase the involvement of the private sector in combatting desertification. This also calls for targeted measures to raise awareness and strengthen the capacity of the private sector, especially in developing and least developed countries, to support services and inputs aimed at sustainable land management.

105. Parties emphasized that more should be done in terms of financing initiatives to combat land degradation and implement SLM practices.

C. Formulation, revision and implementation of action programmes in view of the post-2015 sustainable development framework

106. Parties raised concerns that the Convention is prejudging outcomes of ongoing international consultations and negotiations relating to land degradation neutrality (LDN) and funding opportunities.

107. Parties requested the UNCCD and GEF secretariats to continue consultations on objectives and options for enabling activities for the Sixth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-6), with a view to including technical and financial support for the 2016 reporting and target-setting exercise, particularly in the area of progress reporting and national target-setting towards the LDN goal.

108. The UNCCD and GEF secretariats are requested to continue consultations on objectives and options for GEF-6 enabling activities, with a view to including technical and financial support for the 2016 reporting exercise, including any relevant goals that may come out of the United Nations sustainable development goals process.

109. The Convention's institutions are requested to continue consultations with the GEF on objectives and options for financing enabling activities and actions geared towards the implementation of the Convention and the national action programmes (NAPs), including the technical and financial support for the 2016 reporting process.

110. Affected country Parties are invited to continue consultations on a global plan for the alignment of NAPs with the LDN goal with a view to its further consideration and possible adoption at future COPs.

111. Parties suggested that LDN goals should be included in NAPs or, at the discretion of Parties, in other relevant programmes.

112. The secretariat is requested to continue facilitating pilot projects to assist countries that wish to implement the LDN approach in the formulation, alignment and implementation of the NAPs. In this regard, participating countries are requested to:

(a) Translate the LDN goal into national voluntary targets, making use of the implementation framework and the monitoring and assessment mechanisms established within the UNCCD process;

(b) Assess the extent and the trend of land degradation in the affected areas in their countries, gather and interpret additional relevant data and identify realistic targets for integrating LDN in their NAPs and subsequently monitoring progress;

(c) Establish baseline indicators to set national voluntary targets for LDN within their NAPs; and

(d) Adopt their own national voluntary targets to achieve LDN by 2030.

113. Parties are invited to engage in consultations on the outcome of deliberations of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Land Degradation Neutrality (IWG) with a view to further discussing the issue during the twelfth session of the COP (COP 12).

114. Affected country Parties are invited to continue consultations on the global plan for NAP alignment with any relevant goals that may emerge from the sustainable development goal process.

115. The secretariat and the GM are requested to facilitate such consultations, including by organizing specific meetings back-to-back to COP 12.¹

116. Parties suggested that sustainable development goals, targets and indicators should be taken into account during development and implementation of NAPs and other relevant programmes.

117. Parties requested the GM to continue to: (i) provide support to affected country Parties in establishing national-level integrated investment frameworks (IIFs) for UNCCD implementation that can make full use of existing and emerging funding opportunities. These new funding options should not be seen as replacing funding mechanisms established under the Convention; (ii) explore the engagement of the broadest possible spectrum of investors for scaling up sustainable land management (SLM) across all land-use sectors; and (iii) incentivize land restoration and rehabilitation in degraded lands as well as landscape approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives and biodiversity. Mechanisms and instruments other than the IIFs should be used to leverage domestic and international resources.

118. Parties noted that the development of IIFs and integrated financial strategies is not suitable for all countries due to cost implications and legal constraints. Thus the GM is requested to explore additional mechanisms to support countries in the mobilization and leveraging of domestic and external resources.

119. Developed country Parties and Convention's institutions are invited to consider the establishment of new and additional funds for affected country Parties with a view to implementing SLM practices and LDN goals, particularly for countries which chose to strive towards land degradation neutrality at the national level.

120. The mechanisms and financing sources for the future work of the Convention should be implemented at national level, be based on voluntary targets and should not only be linked to the concept of LDN.

121. The Convention should focus on capacity-building and transfer of technologies under favorable terms for affected country Parties. In addition, the work of the Convention should result in a search for solutions in the field in arid areas and dry sub-humid semi-arid as affected, in a way to meet its objectives and thereby improve the living conditions of its inhabitants, enhance ecosystems, and ultimately reduce poverty.

122. Parties stressed that it is important for the Convention to make use of opportunities that are opening up within a changing international environment.

123. Parties expressed concern about funding for capacity-building activities under the GEF and how much needed financing failed to reach the national level.

¹ Some Parties requested the deletion of paragraph 96 above noting the request to the secretariat and GM in this text could only come through a COP decision, which would create a retroactive request that would be impossible for the secretariat and the GM to fulfil.

IV. Conclusion of the session

A. Adoption of the comprehensive report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to the Conference of the Parties, including conclusions and recommendations

124. At its fourth and fifth meetings on 30 March 2015, the Committee considered the draft report on its thirteenth session.

125. Statements were made by the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, China, Cuba, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Morocco, Namibia, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Swaziland, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Uruguay.

126. The Committee then approved the draft report as a whole, as orally revised, and entrusted the Rapporteur to finalize it in consultation with the Bureau and the secretariat.

B. Closure of the session

127. Also, at the fifth meeting, statements were made by Portugal (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Northern Mediterranean), Armenia (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Central and Eastern Europe), Thailand (on behalf of the Group of Asian States), South Africa (on behalf of the Group of African States), Colombia (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States), the European Union (also on behalf of its Member States), the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of South Sudan.

128. A statement was also made by a representative of the non-governmental organization Journalists Environmental Association (on behalf of civil society organizations).

129. Closing remarks were made by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

130. The Vice-Chair made concluding remarks and declared closed the thirteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification.

Annex I

Documents before the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its eleventh session

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
ICCD/CRIC(13)/1	Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/1/Corr.1	Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the secretariat. Corrigendum
ICCD/CRIC(13)/2	Assessment of the implementation of the Convention: Advocacy, awareness-raising and education. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/2/Corr.1	Assessment of the implementation of the Convention: Advocacy, awareness-raising and education. Note by the secretariat. Corrigendum
ICCD/CRIC(13)/3	Assessment of the implementation of the Convention: policy framework. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/4	Assessment of implementation of the Convention: Science, technology and knowledge. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/5	Assessment of the implementation of the Convention: capacity-building. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/6/Rev.1	Assessment of the implementation of the Convention: financing and technology transfer. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/7/Rev.1	Review of financial support for the implementation of the Convention. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/8	Formulation, revision and implementation of action programmes in view of the post-2015 sustainable development framework. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/INF.1	Information for participants
ICCD/CRIC(13)/INF.2	Status report on the 2014–2015 reporting and review process. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/INF.3	Interim report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Land Degradation Neutrality. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(13)/INF.4	List of participants

Annex II

English and Russian only

Statements made at the opening meeting of the thirteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, on 25 March 2015, by the Regional Implementation Annexes to the Convention and other regional and interest groups

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Statement by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa (Annex I)	20
II. Statement by the representative of India on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Asia (Annex II).....	23
III. Statement by the representative Colombia on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Latin America and the Caribbean (Annex III).....	25
IV. Statement by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for the Northern Mediterranean (Annex IV)	27
V. Statement by the representative of Armenia on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V)	29
VI. Statement by the representative of Latvia on behalf of the European Union and its Member States	31

I. Statement by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa (Annex I)

Mr. Chairman, the Executive Secretary, Members of the CRIC Bureau, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentleman

1. Recap

On behalf of the African Group, I would like to extend our appreciation to the Executive Secretary and her team for organizing the thirteenth session of the CRIC particularly the documentation and facilities put at our disposal. We also thank the Government of Germany and the City of Bonn for hosting us in this beautiful city. We are very certain this CRIC will be a success.

Mr. Chairman, allow me take a step back and reflect on some of the key issues that emerged from COP 11 in Windhoek, Namibia in September 2013. On behalf of the African Group I would like to thank Namibia for successfully hosting COP 11. At that COP we bid farewell to the former Executive Secretary Mr. Luc Gnacadja and we welcomed the new Executive Secretary Ms. Monique Barbut. The African Group reaffirms its commitment to support Ms. Barbut and her team.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you will recall that during COP 11, a number of key decisions were adopted. These included:

- Establishment of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) as a follow up to Rio+20;
- Namibian Declaration on a stronger UNCCD for a land degradation neutral world;
- Adoption of a programme and budget for the 2015/2016 biennium;
- Improving mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention;
- Mid-term review of the 10-year strategic plan and framework and the establishment of process to develop a new strategy and plans to further improve the implementation of the Convention mechanism;
- The relationship with Global Environment Facility (GEF) as a the financial mechanism; and
- Governance and institutional arrangement of the Global Mechanism.

Whilst we note good progress on some of these decisions, some of them need our collective efforts and wisdom in moving forward.

2. Interssional work

Mr. Chairman, you will also recall that decision 8/COP.11 on the follow-up to the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) recognized the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and decided to establish an Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) to: (1) establish a science-based definition of land degradation neutrality (LDN) in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas; (2) develop options relating to arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas that Parties might consider should they strive to achieve land degradation neutrality; and (3) advise the Convention on the implications for its current and future strategy, programmes and the resource requirements.

We are informed that the IWG met three times to deliberate on its work. The IWG will shortly be submitting its report to the COP Bureau that will be deliberated on during the upcoming COP 12. We look forward to positively engage on the outcome of this group which is intended to assist us in developing a programme to implement the LDN concept.

Regarding Country reports, I'm very pleased to report that the African Region recorded a 98 per cent submission during this reporting cycle. We however, encourage the Secretariat to further improve and revise some questions that will allow for reporting on the status, implementation and impacts of desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) on global and regional levels.

During the intersessional period, the Secretariat in collaboration with the Government of Mexico organized the fourth special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-4) and its UNCCD third Scientific Conference. Though this was a successful conference we are concerned about the minimal participation in that conference particularly by the African delegates which appears to have emanated from poor financial support and communication. We commend the African scientists, policy makers and members of civil society that were able to attend the conference for their vigorous contribution on our behalf and the declaration they submitted on our behalf.

Mr. Chairman, the African Group was surprised to learn that in the intervening period, the Coordinator for the African Region was moved from the Region to the UNCCD Headquarters in Bonn, Germany. We hold the view that this move is entirely against previous COP decisions such as decision 3/COP.10 which already adopted the institutional arrangements for the regional coordination mechanisms (RCMs) and the location of the regional coordination units (RCUs).

It is in this context that I take pleasure to report that the African Ministers of the Environment met in Cairo, the Arab Republic of Egypt from 2-6 March 2015 for the 15th session of the African Ministerial Conference (AMCEN 15).

They adopted decision 15/4 relating to strengthening African leadership in the UNCCD processes as part of the Cairo decisions and further decided to support the hosting of the African RCU at an institution within the geographical boundaries of Africa.

Another unsurpassed outcome of these decisions was the fact that the UNCCD will be a stand-alone agenda item in all future AMCEN meetings.

3. Key issues for CRIC 13

According to the agenda placed before us, CRIC 13 will focus its programme of work on:

- Assessment of implementation of the convention on operational objectives of the 10-year strategic plan and framework;
- Review of the financial support for the implementation of the Convention; and
- Formulation, revision and implementation of action programmes in view of the post - 2015 sustainable development framework

Mr. Chairman, traditionally the CRIC provides us with a platform to undertake a review of the implementation of this Convention that in turn feeds into the policy sessions of the COP in form of recommendations. We note with concern therefore that this CRIC session is not comprehensive enough to adequately cover the review of the implementation of the Convention. The allocated two and half days will never be enough for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Convention.

We further note with concern that other equally important issues of the Convention have been left out of the programme of work for CRIC 13. These include inter alia, mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination, collaboration with the GEF and the whole issue of

resource mobilization, collaboration and synergies with other institutions and Conventions, progress and status quo on the governance and institutional arrangement of the Global Mechanism and the involvement and participation of civil society.

4. Others issues for considerations

Mr. Chairman, we are also concerned about the growing momentum to review the operational modalities of the CRIC. Given the history and context of this Convention, the African Group is of the opinion that such a review should be properly managed, in order not to weaken the implementation of the Convention. This prompts us to request the Secretariat and the GM to uphold the provisions of the Convention and COP decisions as and when the two bodies execute their responsibilities.

5. Road to COP 12

Mr. Chairman, we welcome the offer made by the government of Turkey to host COP 12. We have no doubt that COP 12 will be a successful event yet again.

The IWG will present its report during COP 12. We look forward to the recommendations of the IWG on this matter particularly on operationalizing the land degradation neutrality concept.

Distinguished colleagues, we cannot overlook the need for tackling issues of drought through the UNCCD. The COP11 Presidency, Namibia is currently organizing an African Drought Conference which will take place from 11-15 May 2015 in Windhoek. The overall objective of the Conference will be to develop an overarching strategic framework for Africa to enhance its resilience to the impact of drought events. It is proposed that the conference will comprise a three-day meeting of technical experts followed by a one-and-a-half day High Level Segment to be co-chaired by the COP 11 President (Namibia) and the Chair of the African Group (South Africa). We therefore encourage distinguished colleagues to actively support and participate in this worthy Conference.

Let me conclude Mr. Chairman by reassuring you of the African Group commitment to ensuring successful CRIC13 under your leadership. From the Pyramids to Table Mountain; from Kilimanjaro to Timbukutu and Goré (the Island of no return)...these are the voices of Africa!

I thank you Mr. Chairman!

II. Statement by the representative of India on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Asia (Annex II)

Mr. Chair, Chairpersons of various groups, delegates from various countries, ladies and gentlemen

Annex II countries discussed the various agenda items during over the last one and half days. There was active participation from all the member countries which has helped group to formulate its position on key issues effectively.

On the **policy framework** the group expressed the following concerns regarding alignment of their national action programmes (NAPs) with the Strategy:

- (a) Timeliness of funding;
- (b) Timeliness of technical support;
- (c) Timing of NAP aligning workshops;
- (d) Resolution of funding issues.

The Group also felt that there was a need for increasing the engagement of developed country Parties with the affected country Parties on desertification/land degradation and drought issues.

On **synergy among the three Rio conventions**, following measures were suggested by the group:

- (a) Incentive framework for achieving synergy;
- (b) Incorporation of the framework in multilateral and bilateral funding;
- (c) Dissemination of good practices related to synergy;
- (d) Joint planning of all three conventions;
- (e) Greater involvement of National Focal Points;
- (f) Regional and subregional capacity building initiatives in affected country Parties;
- (g) Incentives for removing implementation level problems;
- (h) Global Mechanism suggests measures as to how to improve efficiency of integrated frameworks and integrated investment frameworks.

The Group noted the close correlation with the Sustainable Development Goals and objectives of the convention.

On **financing and technology transfer**, the Group noted the need for strengthening action towards achievement of this objective on ground.

The Group noted dichotomy between achievement of targets related to advocacy, awareness raising and education and actual moment in implementation of the convention. The group also emphasized the need for improving the quality of reporting so that there could be greater correlation between achievement of targets and action on ground. It also noted the need for dissemination of financial models, cost-benefit analysis and various options for involvement of all the stakeholders in synergizing the efforts toward achieving the Land degradation neutrality by bringing in investment from all possible sources while keeping in mind equity and fairness. The group also noted the need for global, regional and national baselines.

On **capacity building**, the group emphasized the need for improving the quality of such efforts by bringing out a capacity building manual. It emphasized the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the efforts and greater capacity for actual adoption of technology.

The Group expressed that much greater efforts needed to be made for improving monitoring and quality of self-assessment. It emphasized the important role that the monitoring systems could play in bringing about alertness at initial stages of the problem. It also emphasized the need for a technical manual for bringing out uniformity and necessary rigor in data.

The Group also emphasized use of various tools available for dissemination of good practices and various forms of media which are becoming increasingly popular.

The Group looks forward to vibrant discussions over the next two and half days and wishes to engage constructively in the process.

Thank you.

III. Statement by the representative Colombia on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Latin America and the Caribbean (Annex III)

Mr. Chair,

I have the honor to deliver this message on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean countries. Given that this is the first intervention of GRULAC, I would like to extend this greeting to the Executive Secretary of the Convention and the Secretariat as well as express our gratitude to the Federal Republic of Germany for the hospitality and facilitation received during the thirteenth Session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 13).

Mr. Chair,

Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world, with incredibly rich and important ecosystems, however it is vulnerable to the effects of desertification, land degradation and drought.

Unplanned expansion of urban areas; inefficient agricultural practices; and adverse atmospheric effects, among others, have contributed to an accelerated deterioration of the quality and stability of land at a regional level.

These factors, together with the various land uses that characterize our region, present opportunities and challenges to maintain the integrity of ecosystems over the long-term and the maintenance of environmental characteristics for, future generations, to meet their economic and social needs.

The benefits of this proper management are innumerable, and include among others, the mitigation of land degradation, improvement of development and overall functionality of watersheds, increased agricultural productivity, food security for a growing world population and preservation of biodiversity.

In view of the foregoing and in order to meet developmental challenges, we take this opportunity to point out the necessity of this Convention to play a more active role not only in the allocation of resources but also in promoting mechanisms to facilitate the sharing of best practices and successful experiences, cooperation, technical assistance and technology transfer on favorable conditions, including preferential and concessional terms as mutually agreed between the developed and affected country parties. This should also incorporate the promotion of endogenous technologies where appropriate. In particular, we emphasize the importance of involving local communities in the development process and implementation of good in situ practices.

We recognize the role of this Convention to Combat Desertification, especially facilitating the efforts of the different countries involved in the search for solutions and alternatives for capacity building. In this context, we emphasize the actions taken by individual Party States, as stated in their reports. At the same time we would like to make an urgent call for the work of this Convention to be directed to concrete actions to ensure that practical plans on the ground are implemented so as to allow affected States to combat desertification land degradation and drought more effectively.

We as developing countries recognize the work being done by the Regional Coordinating Units of the Convention and are in the best position to continue to strengthen these mechanisms. In particular, we emphasize the commitment and diligence of the unity of Latin America and the Caribbean in assisting country Parties in the submission of national reports through the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS). We also commend the improvement of the PRAIS which has made reporting

simpler. However, the reality of our countries do not allow us to make commitments regarding the increase in funding to Regional Coordinating Units, which is why we reiterate that the search for new financing mechanisms is imperative and call for greater commitment from developed country party states and relevant institutions to make additional contributions to the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank you for leading this session of the CRIC, and we would also like to compliment the staff of the Secretariat and the Global Mechanism for their hard work.

IV. Statement by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for the Northern Mediterranean (Annex IV)

Mr. Chairman,

I take the floor on behalf of Annex IV affected country Parties and I would like to thank the Secretariat, the German Government and the City of Bonn for the hospitality in hosting this session; also a word of appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing this meeting and all the hard work for providing the necessary documentation.

Item 2: Assessment of implementation of the Convention

The Mediterranean basin is, as well known, hotspot for climate change and its impacts on soils, as underlined also in the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Together with an unsustainable land management, climate change drives countries in this area to experience serious Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) phenomena, with the associated security implications, i.e. migration.

Chair, 2015 is a crucial year for the international environmental agenda. Annex IV countries believe that it is our responsibility to maintain DLDD present and relevant in the post-2015 negotiations.

While being fully committed to the establishment of a Sustainable Development Goal addressing DLDD and a specific target on Land Degradation Neutrality, we should also take up the associated responsibilities at the global, regional and national levels.

Assessing the implementation of the convention is essential. The results of this assessment and the way forward should be framed simultaneously not only by the need to find common solutions to the obstacles we face, but also by the need to recognize the diversity of national circumstances. Annex IV is paradigmatic in this regard. While all Annex IV parties are affected by DLDD, this is a group which includes Parties at different stages of development and with different capacities to implement the Convention, its Strategy and the respective National Action Programmes.

Annex IV Parties recognize and appreciate the efforts put by all parties and other relevant entities in this reporting exercise. We believe that applying the indicators of operational objectives is an important exercise to understand both how all of us as Parties to this Convention are performing and how together we can improve to reach our common goals.

Let me present some examples of how Annex IV Parties see the way forward for our Convention. I'll give a few examples which illustrate the proposals our group will provide in writing.

Operational objective 1: Advocacy, awareness-raising and education

Regarding Operational objective 1, we are convinced that DLDD should be included in national educational programmes of affected country Parties in order to raise awareness on these phenomena.

Operational objective 2: Policy framework

On Policy framework we believe that the alignment of national action programmes (NAPs) with the 10-year strategic plan and framework of the Convention is a crucial step if we want to combat DLDD. To understand the obstacles to this process we urge Parties to declare their priorities and to clarify the problems they are facing; with this information we

are confident the Secretariat can provide us with options on how to overcome these difficulties

Operational objective 3: Science, technology and knowledge

With regard to analyze, organize and disseminate information on national, regional and global monitoring systems, we feel that there is room for Regional Coordination Mechanisms to work with the secretariat on the proposed in-depth analysis.

Operational objective 4: Building capacities

On the disclosure of information regarding affected country Parties which need further capacity-building assistance it is our understanding that this is a good idea as long as it follows the express consent of interested country parties.

Operational objective 5: Financing and technology transfer

On financing and given the specificities of Annex IV we believe that developed affected country Parties should step up their efforts in financing DLDD projects and activities with internal sources.

With this in mind we would also like to stress that the 2016–2017 work programmes of the Convention's institutions, should be streamlined targeting with priority issues that have emerged from the 2012-2013 reporting process and according to previous COP decisions.

Annex IV Parties believe that while preparing for COP 12 and in line with previous COP decisions any new proposals with budgetary implications should be identified from this moment onwards so that parties can make informed considerations of the proposals put forward and decide accordingly.

Chair, to conclude, let me express the willingness and full commitment of Annex IV Parties to work with you and all the Parties in the best interest of the UNCCD.

We will provide the secretariat with concrete text proposal which reflect the main ideas of our statement.

Many thanks for your attention.

V. Statement by the representative of Armenia on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V)

Уважаемый господин председатель

Уважаемые участники КРОК 13

Дамы и господа

Процесс обзора и анализа осуществления Конвенции ООН по борьбе с опустыниванием является важнейшим элементом для обеспечения эффективной борьбы с опустыниванием, деградацией земель и засухой.

Предыдущая межсессионная сессия КРОК 11, которая проходила в 2013г. в Бонне, получила высокую оценку конвенции.

Нынешний цикл обзора и отчетности характеризуется высоким уровнем активности стран по подготовке национальных отчетов. В частности, все страны ЦВЕ (100%) представили национальные отчеты. Близкие результаты были представлены и другими регионами. Это свидетельствует о высокой заинтересованности Сторон Конвенции в необходимости мониторинга и отчетности по выполнению конвенции в странах.

В этой связи, страны ЦВЕ выражают обеспокоенность ситуацией с организацией и проведением КРОК 13. К сожалению, выполнение решений 19 и 20 КС11 не было обеспечено в полной мере. Мы выражаем благодарность Секретариату за организацию региональных консультаций, но, с сожалением, отмечаем недостаточность времени для полноценного обсуждения и выработки рекомендаций по всем вопросам, вынесенных на рассмотрение в рамках сессии КРОК 13, тем более в ситуации, когда была получена полноценная информация от всех регионов.

В сложившихся обстоятельствах из повестки КРОК 13 вынуждено были исключены важные вопросы, включая «Наилучшие практики» и «Дополнительные процедуры по институциональным механизмам для помощи КС для регулярного обзора осуществления конвенции». Вместе с тем, по мнению стран ЦВЕ необходимо активизировать мероприятия по созданию общедоступных баз данных по «Наилучшим практикам», прежде всего, по устойчивому землепользованию. Проект документа CRP. 2 по реформам КРОК был рассмотрен в нашей группе. Мы считаем, что этот важный документ должен быть изучен более подробно и мы надеемся на поддержку секретариата по организации дополнительных встреч для выработки общих региональных позиций. В целом, сложившаяся ситуация с организацией сессии КРОК, а также, вопроса улучшения эффективности должны быть рассмотрены на КС 12.

В отчетный период страны региона активно работали как на национальном, так и на региональном уровнях. Создан региональный комитет для координации деятельности стран V Приложения, разработана и, в целом, поддержана региональная программа действий по борьбе с деградацией земель в регионе.

Мы полагаем, что достижение цели нейтральной деградации земель должно быть положено в основу усиления профиля Конвенции. При этом, основные усилия должны приниматься на национальном уровне, с учетом национальных и региональных особенностей, условий и обстоятельств.

Стремление достичь нейтральной деградации земель не может ограничиваться только засушливыми землями и должно получить действительно глобальное распространение.

Разработка и осуществление Целей Устойчивого Развития на период после 2015 года должны учитываться в процессе планирования и осуществления Конвенции ООН по борьбе с опустыниванием.

Позиция региона по отдельным вопросам повестки КРОК13 будет представлена по ходу их рассмотрения.

Мы надеемся, несмотря на сложные обстоятельства, КРОК 13 сумеет подготовить надлежащие рекомендации для принятия эффективных решений на КС 12.

Желаем всем участникам КРОК 13 успешной и плодотворной работы.

Благодарю за внимание.

VI. Statement by the representative of Latvia on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

Thank you Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

I would like to thank the German Government and the city of Bonn for their outstanding hospitality in hosting the CRIC 13 session, and the Convention Secretariat for the organization of this session as well as for providing the necessary documentation to be considered by the delegates.

Item 2: Assessment of implementation of the Convention

The European Union and its Member States recognize the importance to review the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) by the Parties and to decide on further steps to be taken to facilitate the effective implementation of the Convention.

We note with satisfaction that the discussion which started back in 2013 here in Bonn during CRIC 11, and the outcomes of COP 11 have resulted in increased activity by country parties and other reporting entities in relation to the submission of reports. This success is mainly due to the effort made by the convention secretariat with regards to the review of the report framework and the method to submit it as well as the capacity building provided to reporting entities. We hope also that multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) reporting systems could better coordinate and take advantage of each other.

We stress the importance of qualitative analysis of the reports in order to obtain effective recommendations.

Operational objective 1: Advocacy, awareness-raising and education

The European Union and its Member States note with satisfaction an increasing number of civil society organizations and scientific and technology institutions that are involved in Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) related projects.

It is crucial to extend the range of audiences that should be addressed concerning the implementation of the Convention, and for this purpose enhance the use of modern communication channels and social media, which may supplement traditional media.

The United Nations International Year of Soils, and particularly the Global Soil Week, provides a unique opportunity to highlight the importance of sustainable soil management in the framework of the DLDD and as the foundation for food, feed, fuel and natural fibre production, essential ecosystem functions, and better mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and biodiversity maintenance.

Operational objective 2: Policy framework

The European Union and its Member States support a policy framework that enables to promote and improve the effectiveness of solutions to combat desertification and land degradation, as well as to mitigate the effects of drought.

In context of the UNCCD, particular importance should be paid to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as biodiversity goals. The European Union and its Member States have called consistently for greater synergies between the three Rio conventions at all levels.

More appropriate ways and means to enhance the implementation of National Action Programmes should be identified in order to capitalize on the substantial investments made

by both affected country Parties and the international community in relation to national policy frameworks.

Operational objective 3: Science, technology and knowledge

The European Union and its Member States recognize the relevance of linking support to the development of monitoring systems with the establishment of baselines and concrete targets within the National Action Plans, making use of scientific, knowledge-based diagnostics at the national level, taking note of existing and future global, national and local related frameworks with mutual advantages.

As a European contribution to this process, in 2015 the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission will release the first ever Global Soil Biodiversity Atlas, as well as a the Portuguese version of the Soil Atlas of Latin America and the Caribbean, and a French-language version of the Soil Atlas of Africa together with a revised second edition of the Soil Atlas of Europe.

Furthermore the Joint Research Centre provides direct support to the secretariat's Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Project by providing its global datasets and technical assistance to the 17 pilot countries integrating the progress indicators Soil Organic Carbon (SOC), Land Productivity Dynamics (LPD) and Land Cover Change (LC).

Operational objective 4: Building capacities

We recognize with satisfaction that the submitted country reports do provide more evidence that both the affected country Parties and the international community, including the United Nations system and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), attach high importance to build and enhance appropriate capacities on desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) in affected country Parties. Nonetheless, a more coordinated approach is needed in order to ensure that special emphasis is put on those countries that are advancing at a slower pace.

Operational objective 5: Financing and technology transfer

We appreciate the positive trend observed in a number of countries that provide integrated investment frameworks (IIFs), which are established within the integrated financial strategy and which reflect the means for leveraging of national, bilateral and multilateral resources to combat desertification land degradation and drought. We note that developed country Parties, together with the GEF and other multilateral financial institutions, might consider how to intensify their efforts in supporting all regions in the establishment of integrated financial strategies, and specifically those countries that have expressed plans to establish IIFs for the forthcoming period. Following the evaluation of IIFs, good practices guidelines should be provided to these countries.

We invite affected country Parties to continue their ongoing efforts to facilitate access to technology transfer in line with decision 14/COP.11.

Item 3: Review of financial support for the implementation of the Convention

The European Union and its Member States appreciate that the Global Support Programme budget of 4.6 million USD, which is devoted to the capacity-building of the UNCCD reporting entities and improvement of the UNCCD reporting systems, has resulted in a 95 per cent reporting rate worldwide for affected country Parties and 69 per cent for developed country Parties.

We support the cooperation with international financial reporting systems, notably, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), in order to improve the overall level of data produced under the currently applied weighting system.

Thank you for your attention and we look forward to fruitful and productive discussions at CRIC 13!
