



Conference of the Parties
Second extraordinary session
Bonn, 6–9 December 2021
Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Opening of the session

Statement by the President of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at the opening of the second extraordinary session

I would like to welcome all representatives of Parties and observers to the second extraordinary session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

The current session is convened following the expression of support by Parties, as notified by the secretariat on 28 June 2021,¹ for the purpose of considering and adopting an interim budget for the programme of work for 2022. Accordingly, I would like to draw the following to the attention of all representatives.

1. Opening of the session

It is my pleasure to declare officially open, through the present communication, the second extraordinary session of the Conference of the Parties (COP(ES-2)) to the UNCCD.

2. Organizational matters

(a) Officers

Consistent with rule 22, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure, the current President and Vice-Presidents will serve as the Bureau of the COP at its second extraordinary session.

(b) Adoption of the agenda

The provisional annotated agenda (ICCD/COP(ES-2)/1) prepared by the secretariat, in accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure, in agreement with the President of the COP and rule 14 of the rules of procedure and notified to the Parties and observers earlier by the Executive Secretary, is hereby adopted further to the explanation provided in paragraph 7 of the annotated provisional agenda.

¹ See notification at: [Countries-COP ES-2-eng-web-final.pdf \(unccd.int\)](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2021-06/Countries-COP-ES-2-eng-web-final.pdf).



(c) **Credentials of delegations**

In line with rule 19 of the rules of procedure, the credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the permanent secretariat, if possible, no later than 24 hours after the opening of the session.

Owing to the extraordinary conditions under which the forthcoming COP (ES-2) is being convened, the COP14 Bureau, at its meeting on 30 November, decided, on an exceptional basis and limited to the COP (ES-2) session only, to accept – if necessary – a letter issued by the respective National Focal Point, in lieu of the formal credentials otherwise required by rules 19 and 20 of the COP rules of procedure.

(d) **Accreditation of intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, and representatives from the private sector, and admission of observers**

In accordance with the provisions of article 22, paragraph 7, of the Convention, of rules 6 and 7 of the rules of procedure, and of decision 26/COP.1, the list of intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, recommended for accreditation at COP(ES-2), as contained in document ICCD/COP(ES-2)/3, is hereby agreed by the COP.

(e) **Organization of work**

COP(ES-2) will be held remotely through a written silence procedure, as specified in paragraphs 10 and 11 of the annotated provisional agenda. A brief further explanation of the procedure is attached to the present communication (see annex).

3. Programme and budget – Proposed interim budget for 2022

It is my pleasure to submit the enclosed draft decision² on the interim budget for 2022 for consideration and adoption by Parties. The draft decision is the outcome of a review and consultation by the informal budget group which was constituted along the lines of the Budget Contact Group format used at ordinary sessions of the COP and notified to Parties and observers on 6 September 2021.³ On behalf of the Bureau, I would like to thank Mr Bongani Masuku of Eswatini for efficiently coordinating and facilitating the work of the informal group.

The enclosed draft decision is hereby placed under the silence procedure until 12.30 p.m. Bonn time (Central European Time) on Thursday 9 December 2021. Comments, if any, may be directed, by or through a head of delegation, to the Executive Secretary at secretariat@unccd.int.

4. Report on the session

Further to paragraph 17 of the provisional agenda, an outline of the draft report, together with the present communication, will be conveyed to delegates on Thursday 9 December 2021 at 1.30 p.m. Bonn time (Central European Time), at which time it will be considered adopted.

² Please check the following link: [ICCD/COP\(ES-2\)/L.2 | UNCCD](#).

³ See notification at: [Countries-web-COP ES-2-eng.pdf \(unccd.int\)](#).

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my solidarity with Parties and all delegates to this extraordinary session that is taking place in such challenging times, in their fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

(Signed) Mr. Bhupender Yadav
Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India and
President of the Conference of the Parties to the
to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

Annex

Brief description of the “silence procedure”

The “silence procedure”, which is also known as the “written procedure” or the “no objection procedure”, is a procedure used by certain United Nations bodies to adopt decisions while not meeting in person. Where a plenary meeting is not practical, a draft decision is circulated in writing by the presiding officer of the relevant body under a silence procedure, usually lasting up to 72 hours. The use of a written/silence procedure presupposes prior consultations or negotiations relative to the decision that is tabled for adoption. The presiding officer usually makes sure that no issues will arise or no objection be made against the draft decision during the period of silence. If the silence is not broken, the decision is presumed adopted.

The second extraordinary session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will be held from 6 to 9 December 2021 to consider and adopt the interim budget for 2022. The session will be held remotely through a silence procedure.

In order to ensure the smooth adoption of the proposed interim budget by the COP to the UNCCD, an informal group of representatives of Parties was established. The composition and operation of the informal group was constituted along the lines of the Budget Contact Group format used at ordinary sessions of the COP. Participation in the informal budget group was open to all delegations. Accordingly, the informal group reviewed the budget proposed by the Executive Secretary and held a series of virtual consultations between 18 October and 12 November 2021. The Group completed its work and submitted a draft decision to the President of the COP. The draft decision on the interim budget for the year 2022 is expected to be adopted following the 72 hours of silence on 9 December 2021.
