



United Nations

ICCD/CST(S-4)/INF.1



## Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.: General  
9 December 2014

Original: English

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### Committee on Science and Technology

#### Fourth special session

Cancun, 9–12 March 2015

## Information for participants

The fourth special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-4) with its UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), hereinafter referred to as “the conference”, will be held from 9 to 12 March 2015 in Cancun, Mexico. The present document contains general information which may be helpful to participants. Additional information will be provided in due course on the UNCCD website <[www.unccd.int](http://www.unccd.int)>.

### 1. Secretariat

The secretariat of the UNCCD is headed by the Executive Secretary, Ms. Monique Barbut, and based in Bonn, Germany, at:

Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification  
Langer Eugen  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
53113 Bonn, Germany  
Tel.: + 49 228 815 2800  
Fax: + 49 228 815 2898/99  
E-mail: [secretariat@unccd.int](mailto:secretariat@unccd.int)

### 2. Venue of the session

The conference will be held at Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions, in Cancun, located at:

GE.14-23984 (E)



\* 1 4 2 3 9 8 4 \*

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Boulevard Kukulcan Km 9  
Zona Hotelera  
77500 Cancun  
Quintana Roo  
Mexico  
Tel.: + 52 998 881 0400  
Fax: + 52 998 881 0402  
E-mail: info@cancuncenter.com  
Website: <www.cancuncenter.com/>

### **3. Admittance to the session**

The provisions governing the Conference of the Parties (COP) apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of its subsidiary bodies. Participation in the conference is therefore open to Party delegations, United Nations specialized agencies and observers in accordance with the provisions of the UNCCD and the rules of procedure of the COP.<sup>1</sup>

Party delegations do not need to present credentials because the CST is a subsidiary body of the COP. However, an official list of delegation members should be forwarded to the UNCCD secretariat, for registration and security purposes, before the conference. Observers already accredited to previous sessions of the COP should also comply with this requirement.

Any body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which has not yet obtained observer status may be admitted to the conference on submission of an official request to the UNCCD secretariat, pending the decision on its accreditation as an observer by the COP at its next ordinary session. This request should state the competence or qualification of the body or agency in matters covered by the UNCCD.

### **4. Registration**

Registration for national delegations, United Nations specialized agencies and programmes, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as for the media and United Nations staff, will take place from Monday, 9 March to Thursday, 12 March 2015 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the registration desk in the Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with article 36, paragraph 2, of the Convention, for each State or regional economic integration organization which ratifies, accepts, approves or accedes to the Convention after the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, the Convention enters into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit by such State or regional economic integration organization of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. Consequently, the Parties as at the opening of the conference on 9 March 2015 will be the States and regional economic integration organizations that have deposited their instruments by 9 December 2014. States that deposited their instruments after 9 December but by 12 December 2014 will become Parties during the session. States that deposited their instruments after 12 December 2014 will not become Parties until after the session is closed, but may participate in the session as observers. Intergovernmental, non-governmental and civil society organizations and observers that were accredited at the eleventh session of the COP are listed in document ICCD/COP(11)/20/Rev.1. Relevant information on the status of ratifications is available on the secretariat website <www.unccd.int>.

The CST S-4 session will convene its work on 9–12 March 2015. The UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference will be held during the CST S-4 session. The timing of the meetings will be announced in the Official Journal of the session.

In addition to the Plenary Hall, meeting rooms will be made available, without interpretation services, for informal meetings. Arrangements for such meetings should be made with the secretariat.<sup>2</sup> Working hours will normally be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Identity badges will be issued at the time of registration and participants are requested to wear them at all times since access to the Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions is allowed only upon presentation of badges.

## 5. How to reach the conference venue

### Flights

Cancun International Airport (CUN) is one of the busiest airports in the region. Major international airlines as well as charter airlines have direct or connecting flights to Cancun every day.

Cancun International Airport is located about 25 minutes from the city of Cancun. Transportation options for participants arriving at this airport include: local city buses, hotel shared shuttles, taxi, etc., to the Cancun hotels area.

Taxis are located just outside both terminals of Cancun International Airport; tickets can be purchased inside at the baggage claim area or outside. A one-way journey to the city costs around 550 Mexican pesos (USD 50). Within the airport, there are ATMs of the major Mexican banks, some of which allow cash withdraws with international cards.

A dedicated UNCCD CST S-4 information counter will be set up by the organizers at Cancun International Airport (arrivals area). Volunteers will assist participants with transportation information or other inquiries they may have.

### Car rental - Cancun International Airport

Cancun International Airport has the largest car rental location in the area, with most of the major car rental companies located within the grounds of the airport. Information on services, rates and availability may be obtained by telephoning the Car Rental Customer Service on the following numbers:

From the United States of America and Canada (toll free): 1 888 414 0017

International direct dialling: + 52 998 848 0335

From Mexico: 01 800 822 7116

### How to reach Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions

Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions<sup>3</sup> is located approximately 9.5 km from Cancun city centre and 18 km from Cancun International Airport. Within a few minutes

<sup>2</sup> Please check the Official Journal of the session for relevant contacts.

<sup>3</sup> Its exact location may be found at:

<<https://maps.google.com.mx/maps?q=Canc%C3%BAAn+Center&ie=UTF8&ll=21.135125,-86.747704&spn=0.011148,0.018625&safe=active&fb=1&gl=mx&cid=3397251811409248777&t=h&z=16>>.

walking distance, participants can find restaurants, convenience stores, drugstores, banks and other services.

## 6. Hotel accommodation

Participants are responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements, and are encouraged to finalize their booking and payment as early as possible.

The following hotels are offering a special rate for CST S-4 participants, according to availability; the code "UNCCD" should be mentioned when making reservations:

### **Aloft Cancun**

Boulevard Kukulcan Km 9  
MZ 48 L-8-1, Zona Hotelera  
Cancun, Quintana Roo  
77500, Mexico  
Tel.: + 52 998 848 9900  
E-mail: Diana.Gomez@alofthotels.com; reservations.03930@starwoodhotels.com  
Website: <www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=1410158636&key=383F151E>

### **Krystal Cancun**

Boulevard Kukulcan Km 9  
Lotes 9 y 9 A, Zona Hotelera  
Cancun, Quintana Roo  
77500, Mexico  
Tel.: + 52 998 848-9800  
Fax: + 52 998 848-9813  
E-mail: reservacionescancun1@krystal-hotels.com; reservacionescancun@krystal-hotels.com  
Website: <www.krystal-hotels.com/Cancun/english>

### **Krystal Grand Punta Cancun**

Boulevard Kukulcan Km. 8.5  
MZ 51 L-8, Zona Hotelera  
Cancun, Quintana Roo  
77500, México  
Tel.: + 52 998 891 5555  
Reservations: + 52 998 883 1438  
E-mail: reservacionescancun.kgpc@krystal-hotels.com; reservacionescancun@krystal-hotels.com  
Website: <www.krystal-hotels.com/punta\_cancun/english>

For other hotel options, please visit the website <<http://cancun.travel/en/hotels/>>.

CST S-4 participants are advised to stay in hotels that are within or close to the Hotel Zone. Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions is located approximately 9.5 km from Cancun city centre. Taxi fees from Cancun city centre to Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions are approximately 250 Mexican pesos (USD 20) per ride. Public transportation is available at 9.50 Mexican pesos (USD 0.70) per ride.

## 7. Services available for participants at the session venue

Information on medical services and emergency numbers, postal, telephone, fax, photocopying and Internet services, cafeterias, bars, banking services, travel agency and any other additional services available for participants will be published in the Official Journal of the session.

## 8. Immigration formalities and customs regulations

### Visa regulations

The Government of Mexico encourages participants to apply for their visa as early as possible through their nearest Mexican embassy or consulate. The visa has always to be applied for by the person who intends to travel. Please note that in most embassies appointments are necessary to file the application.

Further information on the procedure and details of the documents to be presented are available on the website of the competent Mexican embassy or consulate.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, a table of countries whose citizens require/do not require visas to enter Mexico may be found on the website of the National Immigration Institute of Mexico.<sup>5</sup>

Citizens of countries that require visas to travel to Mexico will not be required to process a visa if presenting one of the following documents at the port of entry:

- (a) Document certifying permanent residence in Canada, the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland or any country member of the Schengen Area;
- (b) Valid visa of the United States;
- (c) APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) approved by Mexico.

### Customs regulations

Detailed information on customs regulations in force in Mexico may be obtained from any Mexican embassy or consulate.

## 9. Intervention at official meetings

General Assembly resolution 64/230 on the pattern of conferences requests the Secretary-General to, inter alia, redouble his efforts to ensure the highest quality of interpretation services. In the interest of ensuring that meetings run smoothly, participants are reminded of the need to maintain a normal speed whenever delivering speeches or making statements, so that the provision of the required high-quality simultaneous interpretation services can be achieved to the entire satisfaction of all participants.

<sup>4</sup> The competent Mexican mission may be found at:  
<[www.sre.gob.mx/index.php/representaciones/embajadas-de-mexico-en-el-exterior](http://www.sre.gob.mx/index.php/representaciones/embajadas-de-mexico-en-el-exterior)> and  
<[www.sre.gob.mx/index.php/representaciones/consulados-de-mexico-en-el-exterior](http://www.sre.gob.mx/index.php/representaciones/consulados-de-mexico-en-el-exterior)>.

<sup>5</sup> <[www.inm.gob.mx/index.php?page/Paises\\_visas](http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php?page/Paises_visas)> and  
<[www.inm.gob.mx/index.php?page/Paises\\_No\\_Visa](http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php?page/Paises_No_Visa)>.

## 10. Side events

Participants who wish to organize side events during the conference are requested to apply to the secretariat by telephone, fax and/or e-mail:

Tel.: + 49 228 815 2800  
Fax: + 49 228 815 2898/99  
E-mail: [sideevents@unccd.int](mailto:sideevents@unccd.int)

The application form can be downloaded from the UNCCD website at [www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/the-bodies/The-CST/Pages/CST-S4.aspx](http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/the-bodies/The-CST/Pages/CST-S4.aspx) and should be submitted before 9 January 2015.

Participants are advised that the secretariat is responsible only for room allocation. Time slots and rooms will be accommodated according to availability on a first-come, first-served basis. Due to in-session activity, last-minute changes or even cancellations can occur on rare occasions for some side events. Additional services (such as catering, technical equipment, etc.) may be obtained on a commercial basis from local accredited providers, as follows:

### **Catering:**

Ms. Fernanda Loaiza  
Customer Service Executive  
Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions  
Tel.: + 52 998 881 0446  
E-mail: [floaiza@cancuncenter.com](mailto:floaiza@cancuncenter.com)

Should a side event require interpretation services, simultaneous interpretation from English/French/Spanish and vice versa can be made available on a commercial basis through:

Mr. Salvador Salazar  
Tel.: + 52 998 881 0454  
PSAV  
E-mail: [ssalazar@psav.com](mailto:ssalazar@psav.com)

A calendar of side events during CST S-4 will be published in the Official Journal of the session. For any additional information on side events, please refer to the guidelines posted on the UNCCD website [www.unccd.int](http://www.unccd.int).

## 11. Exhibition facilities

Space for exhibition facilities will be available to participants. Arrangements can be made through the secretariat on a first-come, first-served basis.

Participants wishing to set up exhibits are invited to contact Ms. Katya Arapnakova at:

Tel.: + 49 228 815 2864  
Fax: + 49 228 815 2898/99  
E-mail: [exhibition@unccd.int](mailto:exhibition@unccd.int)

The secretariat is responsible only for the allocation of exhibition space. Applicants will be allotted a maximum of 9 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space, which will be assigned with due consideration of the relevance to the objectives of the Convention and equitable geographical distribution requirements. The deadline for the submission of requests to the secretariat is 9 January 2015.

Exhibitors will be responsible for the customs clearance of their exhibition material in accordance with the customs regulations of Mexico. The secretariat may, however, provide assistance. Exhibitors will be responsible for their own stands. The setting up of exhibition structures must be done in consultation with the management of Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions. For all further information about additional equipment for exhibitors, including infrastructure and technology, as well as transport, shipment and storage, please contact:

Mr. Daniel Concha  
Customer Service Manager  
Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions  
Tel.: + 52 998 881 0445  
E-mail: dconcha@cancuncenter.com

Deliveries of exhibition equipment may be made to the following address:

Cancun Center Conventions & Exhibitions  
- UNCCD CST-S4/2015 -  
*Name and number of exhibition booth*  
Boulevard Kukulcan Km 9  
Centro de Convenciones  
Zona Hotelera  
77500 Cancun, Quintana Roo  
Mexico

Deliveries will be accepted from 5 March 2014 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

In case of queries, please contact Mr. Daniel Concha (see contact details above).

Additional services such as catering may be obtained on a commercial basis from the locally accredited provider, as listed under item 10 above.

For any additional information on exhibition facilities, please refer to the information posted on the UNCCD website at <[www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/the-bodies/The-CST/Pages/CST-S4.aspx](http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/the-bodies/The-CST/Pages/CST-S4.aspx)>.

## **12. Press centre/Information for the media**

An international press centre will be provided for accredited journalists.

For information concerning accreditation, please contact:

Ms. Wagaki Mwangi  
Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification  
Langer Eugen  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
53113 Bonn  
Germany  
Tel.: + 49 228 815 2820  
Fax: + 49 228 815 2898/99  
E-mail: wmwangi@unccd.int

## 13. General information about the session venue

### Information about Cancun

Useful information about Cancun, including hotel accommodation, transport and other facilities, can be found at the following website: <<http://cancun.travel/en/>>.

### Currency

The national currency is the Mexican peso, with the currency code MXN and the currency symbol \$. United States dollars are also widely accepted. Banks are open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and currency exchange houses that are open much later can be found all over Cancun. Exchange rates are as follows:

USD 1 = approximately MXN 13.4

EUR 1 = approximately MXN 16.8

### Weather

The weather slowly begins to warm up in Cancun in March, when the average temperature is around 25 °C, with highs of up to 29 °C and lows of 22 °C.

### Electricity

The standard Cancun electricity supply is 110 volts. Hotels usually offer voltage converters for 220 volt devices. Many sockets do not accept polarized or three-prong plugs so it is recommended that you bring your own adapter. They can usually also be bought in the hotel shop.

### Local time

Cancun time zone is six hours earlier than Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

### Business hours

Banks:

Weekdays: 9 a.m. to p.m.

Saturdays: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (not all banks)

Sundays and national holidays: closed

Government offices and organizations:

Weekdays: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Weekends and national holidays: closed

Post offices:

Weekdays: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturdays: 8 a.m. to noon

Sundays and national holidays: closed

Department stores:

Weekdays: 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. (varies between stores)

### Taxes

Value added tax (VAT) is levied on most goods and services at a standard rate of 16 per cent. Visitors to Mexico may be able to get a refund of the Mexico VAT paid on any goods bought for deportation. To get a VAT refund, receipts for the goods purchased (and possibly proof of deportation of the goods) should be presented at a Mexico VAT refund station (which are often found in airports, tourist offices or international travel hubs).



**Travel information**

Further information on travel and tourism in Mexico is available in eight languages at: <[www.visitmexico.com/en/](http://www.visitmexico.com/en/)>.

Further information on the conference is available on the UNCCD home page: <[www.unccd.int](http://www.unccd.int)>.

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