

March 2012

	منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة	联合国 粮食及 农业组织	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture	Продовольственная и сельскохозяйственная организация Объединенных Наций	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura
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**TWENTY-EIGHTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE
THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON
AGRICULTURE**

**Baku, Azerbaijan, 19 and 20 April 2012
Baku, Azerbaijan, 17 and 18 April 2012**

INFORMATION NOTE

Conference arrangements

The 28th FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) and the 37th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Baku (Azadlig Av.1, Baku, Azerbaijan AZ1000), Azerbaijan from 17 to 20 April 2012.

The ECA Session will be held on 17 and 18 April and will begin at 14.00 hours on Tuesday 17 April. The ERC will be held on 19 and 20 April 2012 and the opening ceremony will start at 08.30 hours on Thursday 19 April 2012.

An Order of the Day will be issued daily with detailed information on Conference business, the schedule and items to be discussed, as well as other information of general interest.

The ERC Conference Secretary and all other staff assisting will be recorded on a list issued on the first day of the ECA and ERC with names and functions.

Working languages

Both for the ECA and the ERC there will be simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Russian, Spanish and Azerbaijani. The documentation for both sessions will be issued in English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Press liaison and information

For the duration of the Conference, an FAO Information Officer in cooperation with a Press Officer of the Government of Azerbaijan, will be responsible for relations with the press and all matters concerning information to the public.

It is strongly recommended that accreditation be undertaken in advance, but it can also be carried out at the Conference site. Journalists should present two passport-size photographs and a letter of assignment from their editor or employer. For advance accreditation, journalists should contact Mehdi.Drissi@fao.org at the FAO Regional Office for Europe.

This document is printed in limited numbers to minimize the environmental impact of FAO's processes and contribute to climate neutrality. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and to avoid asking for additional copies. Most FAO meeting documents are available on the Internet at www.fao.org

Documentation

Each participant will receive via e-mail copies of all the pre-session documents, which will also be accessible on the REU Website: <http://www.fao.org/europe/regional-conference/announcement/en/> from where any further copies can be downloaded. Printed copies of the pre-session documents will be made available on the spot only upon request and in limited quantities. In addition, all documents will be made available to participants on pen-drives when registering. Participants are encouraged to bring personal lap-tops in order to access the pre-session documents online and thus reduce the need for hard copy documents.

In-session documents are grouped into three categories: LIM documents, Statements and Daily Journals (Order of the Day), and will be made available on the Regional Conference Website: <http://www.fao.org/europe/regional-conference/announcement/en/> and at the Documents Distribution Desk located outside the Conference hall, where staff will also deliver mail and messages and deal with general enquiries.

Draft recommendations and amendments

Participants wishing to submit draft recommendations or other documents requiring a decision by the Conference, are requested to hand their texts to the Conference Secretary, in English, French, Russian or Spanish or provide the text in electronic form by e-mail.

Participants wishing to distribute other written material related to the Conference agenda are requested to deliver 100 copies in English, 50 in French, 40 in Russian and 20 in Spanish to the Secretariat for distribution.

Advance communication of the texts of speeches and statements

To facilitate the Secretariat's task and ensure accuracy of interpretation, prepared speeches or statements should be handed in advance to the Conference Secretary, or provided in electronic form by e-mail to ERC-ECA-Secretary@fao.org

Correspondences and inquiries

All correspondence or inquiries concerning the Regional Conference should be addressed to the Conference Secretary, to the FAO Representative in Azerbaijan, to the Government Liaison Officer in Azerbaijan, and the Conference Affairs Assistant at the addresses below:

Mr Raimund Jehle
Conference Secretary
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Subregional Coordinator for Central Asia
FAO Representative in Azerbaijan
FAO Subregional Office for Central Asia
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Mr Rashad Majidov
Government Liaison Officer
Deputy Head of International Cooperation Department
Ministry of Agriculture
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Ms Beata Somogyi
Conference Affairs Assistant
FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
Budapest, Hungary
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Fax: + 36-1 351-7029
E-mail: ERC-ECA-Secretary@fao.org

Formalities for entry into Azerbaijan

Participants not requiring a visa: A mutual visa-free regime is applied between the Republic of Azerbaijan and countries listed in Annex B. Under Group I, those countries are listed, for which a visa-free regime applies to holders of diplomatic or service (official/special) passports. Under Group II, those countries are listed, for which a visa-free regime applies to the holders of any kind of passport. Participants are advised to contact the local Embassy or Consulate of Azerbaijan, in order to make sure there has not been a change in the agreement.

Participants requiring a visa: Citizens not listed in Groups I and II require a visa for entry into Azerbaijan. The possibility of being issued a visa free of charge upon arrival has been granted for all participants and accompanying persons (letter from Cabinet of Ministers, No. 17/182-22/10, dated 19 January 2012). However, participants may prefer to apply for a visa at the Embassy or Consulate of Azerbaijan in their own country. All Embassies and Consulates in the countries of FAO's European and Central Asian Region have been sent an information circular by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, with instructions that visas for the ERC and the ECA should be issued free of charge, within one working week.

In either case, as a first step, participants are requested to complete the visa request data and upload a scanned copy of their passports during online registration (on the website of the Regional Office: <http://www.fao.org/europe/en/>) not later than 15 March 2012. The Conference Secretariat will then forward the information to the Ministry of Agriculture in Azerbaijan, through the FAO Representation in Azerbaijan.

1. Participants who wish to apply for a visa at the local Embassy or Consulate of Azerbaijan, will receive a personal letter of invitation issued by the Conference Secretariat soon after completing the requested data and uploading their passport copies in the online registration system. They should then proceed with submitting their application to the local Embassy or Consulate of Azerbaijan, together with the following documents:

- Personal letter of invitation issued by the Regional Office (in 2 copies)
- 1 completed visa application form - can be downloaded from:
<http://mfa.gov.az/images/stories/downloads/applicationforvisa.pdf>
- 2 colour photographs (3 x 4 cm)
- Valid passport (with at least 3 months validity remaining)

Participants are kindly requested to keep a copy of the personal invitation letter at the time of their travel to Azerbaijan.

2. Participants who wish to apply for a visa upon arrival in Baku, after having their visa authorized by the State Migration Service of Azerbaijan, will receive a letter from the Conference Secretariat, issued by the State Migration Service, confirming that they will be granted a visa upon arrival. Participants should have this letter with them when travelling to Baku, to show it to their airline in case of any problems. In addition, the Conference Secretariat will send a personal invitation letter to the participants. At the time of travel, the participant should have the following documents:

- A copy of the letter issued by the State Migration Service
- Personal letter of invitation issued by the Regional Office (in 2 copies)
- 1 completed visa application form - can be downloaded from:
<http://mfa.gov.az/images/stories/downloads/applicationforvisa.pdf>
- 2 colour photographs (3 x 4 cm)
- Valid passport (with at least 3 months validity remaining)

If any further assistance should be required, please contact:

Ms. Tahmina Ibrahimova
Contact Officer for Visa Formalities
Chief Expert of the International Relations Department
Ministry of Agriculture
Tel: + 99412 4931423
Mobile phone: + 99455 7333330
E-mail: tahmina_ibrahim@mail.ru

Mr Orkhan Baylarov
Programme Clerk
FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
Budapest, Hungary
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Fax: + 36-1 351-7029
E-mail: ERC-ECA-Secretary@fao.org

Upon arrival to Baku, Participants will be passing through the VIP lounge of airport, where representatives from the authorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan will meet them to assist with passport control, visa issuance of needed, customs formalities and luggage recovery and to provide any other necessary assistance. Transport will be provided from the airport to the hotels listed in Annex A on 16, 17, 18 and 19 April 2012, and from the hotels to the airport on departure.

Foreign exchange and banking facilities

The exchange bureaux and banks will provide information on exchange rates and will take care of exchange and transfer operations. The national currency is the Azeri Manat; currently the exchange rate is: 1US\$ = 0.78 AZN. An Exchange Bureau will be available at the Conference premises.

First-aid Services

First-aid services will be available at the Conference premises.

Hotel reservations

Hotels with special rates for the conference period are listed in Annex A. Participants are requested to indicate their preference for accommodation (a choice of two hotels in order of preference) while completing the registration form online (on the website of the Regional Office: <http://www.fao.org/europe/en/>). The participants will then be contacted by the Conference Secretariat, asking for their credit card details, and with that, a confirmation of the hotel booking. The contact persons for registrations and hotel bookings are: Mr Gabor Feher (e-mail: ERC-ECA-Secretary@fao.org) in the FAO Regional Office, Ms Jamila Soltanova (e-mail: fao@rrtourism.az) in R & R Travel Agency and Mr Rashad Majidov, Government Liaison Officer (e-mail: rashadmajidov@yahoo.com) in the Ministry of Agriculture in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Please note that the dates until which the special rates are valid, are indicated under the "more information" section, beside the name of each hotel.

On-site registration

Registration for the ECA session will be between 17.00 and 18.30 hours on Monday 16 April 2012 and between 12.00 and 14.00 hours on Tuesday 17 April 2012, at the Conference site.

Registration for the ERC session will be between 17.00 and 18.30 hours on Wednesday 18 April 2012, and between 07.30 and 08.30 hours on Thursday 19 April 2012, at the Conference site. The Conference Secretariat will prepare a provisional list of participants on the first day of the Conference and should be notified of any corrections or additions needed, with all relevant information provided to the Registration or Documents Distribution Desk.

Climate

In April the average temperature in Azerbaijan ranges from 16°C during the day to 8°C at night.

Electricity

Electricity voltage used in Azerbaijan is 220 V; adapters are needed but are available or can be requested at the hotels.

Study tours and spouse programme

At the invitation of the Host Government, there will be a study tour for participants on the morning of Friday 20 April 2012. Participants wishing to take part are kindly requested to inform staff at the Registration or Documents Distribution Desk not later than Thursday 19 April, 13.00 hours, so that the Host Government can make the necessary arrangements. Further details will be made available upon arrival in Baku and relevant information will be included in the Order of the Day.

The Host Government will also be organizing a programme for spouses on Thursday 19 April 2012, in the afternoon. The programme will comprise sightseeing in the “Old City” – medieval quarter of Baku: “Shirvanshakhs Palace” (UNESCO Heritage Site), Mohammad’s mosque, baths, samples of residential buildings, Market Square, Caravan Saray “Bukhara” and “Multani” and the Maiden Tower Entrance – the oldest construction in Baku (also under UNESCO protection). The programme will then continue with a visit to the Azerbaijan State Carpet and Applied Arts Museum.

Catering Services

The Hilton Hotel has a restaurant and a coffee bar. Lunch will be served from 17 to 20 April 2012 inclusive, generously offered by the Government of Azerbaijan.

Social Events

Wednesday 18 April 2012 - Evening Reception for the ERC hosted by His Excellency Ismat Abasov, Minister for Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Thursday 19 April 2012 - Evening Reception hosted by Mr José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General.

Side Events

During the Conference week there will be the following side events taking place:

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| 1. Committee on World Food Security - Tools: | 17 April, 12.00 - 13.00 hours |
| 2. Regional Development Potentials in Fisheries and Aquaculture: | 18 April, 13.30 - 17.00 hours |
| 3. Watershed management – linking forestry with other land use systems
in the age of climate change: | 18 April, 09.00 - 13.00 hours
and 16.00 - 18.00 hours |
| 4. Toward Sustainable Food Systems and Increased Agro Biodiversity:
More Attention to Rye | 18 April, 13.00 - 15.00 hours |
| 5. "Save and Grow" and promotion of Conservation Agriculture | 18 April, 16.00 - 18.00 hours |
| 6. Green Economy | 19 April, 13.00 - 14.00 hours |

ANNEX A

LIST OF HOTELS¹

Name of Hotel	Number of rooms held by organizers	Tariff
Hilton Hotel Baku Azadlig Av. 1, Baku, Azerbaijan AZ1000 TEL: + 994-12-4645000 FAX: 994-12-4645001 WEBSITE: http://www1.hilton.com/en_US/hi/hotel/GYDHBHI-Hilton-Baku/index.do	130 single rooms	Single room: AZN 140 (breakfast included) Single Deluxe room AZN 195 (breakfast included) Double room: AZN 158 (breakfast included) Double Deluxe: AZN 213 (breakfast included) Single Suite: AZN 370 (breakfast included)
Park Inn Hotel Baku Azadlig Avenue 1 - AZ 1000 Baku - Azerbaijan TEL: +994 12 490 6000 FAX: +994 12 496 8900 WEBSITE: http://www.parkinn.com/hotel-baku	70 single rooms	Single standard room: AZN 120. (breakfast included) Single business-friendly room: AZN 160 Double standard room: AZN 150 (breakfast included) Junior Suite: AZN 200
Crown Hotel Neftchi Gurban Abbasov street 7, Baku, Azerbaijan, AZ1003 TEL: +99412 4910227 FAX: +99412 491 0229 WEBSITE: www.crownhotelbaku.com	30 single rooms	Deluxe single room: AZN 85 (breakfast included) Deluxe double room: AZN 105. (breakfast included) Deluxe suite: AZN 200
Ganjeli Plaza Hotel U.Khadjibekov 48, AZ 1010 TEL: +994 12 498 92 90 FAX: - WEBSITE: http://genceli.az/hotel.html	30 single rooms	Single room: AZN 90 (breakfast included) Double room: AZN 110 (breakfast included) Junior Suite: AZN 140 King Suite: AZN 170

¹ Transport will be provided for participants to and from the hotels to the Conference venue for the ECA and ERC sessions.

ANNEX B

List of countries of the Europe and Central Asia Region of FAO, for which the Republic of Azerbaijan applies a visa-free regime for holders of valid respective passports

Group I:

Country	Type of Passport
Austria	Diplomatic and service
Bulgaria	Diplomatic and service
Estonia	Diplomatic
France	Diplomatic
Hungary	Diplomatic and service
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Diplomatic and service
Montenegro	Diplomatic and service
Romania	Diplomatic and service
Serbia	Diplomatic, service and official
Slovakia	Diplomatic and service
Slovenia	Diplomatic
Turkey	Diplomatic, service and special
Turkmenistan	Diplomatic and service

Group II:

Country	Type of Passport
Belarus	All types of passports
Georgia	All types of passports
Kazakhstan	All types of passports
Kyrgyzstan	All types of passports
Moldova	All types of passports
Russia	All types of passports
Tajikistan	All types of passports
Ukraine	All types of passports
Uzbekistan	All types of passports