

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda item 3

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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
Forty-third Session

Comments from Malaysia

**INTERMEDIATE REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
- "CODEX AND THE PANDEMIC - STRATEGIC CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES"**

Malaysia would like to congratulate CCEXEC sub-committee and express our appreciation on the effort made in preparing the intermediary report to ensure the work of the Codex Alimentarius is not affected due to the impact of pandemic COVID-19.

Malaysia supports procedural mechanisms to be developed by the Codex Secretariat to allow Codex Committees to meet and for the work of the Commission to proceed in 2021, should physical meetings continue to be a challenge due to pandemic situation that is still uncertain. The procedural mechanism on the conduct of Codex work using modern tools should take into account Codex core values of inclusiveness, transparency, collaboration and consensus building; and to adapt the rules of physical meetings as mandated in the Procedural Manual as close as possible.

Malaysia is of the view that the current Guidance to Participants of CAC43 provides clear guidance to participants on the management of Codex virtual session. Information provided can be used as a basis and applied to other Codex Committees' virtual sessions in the near future.

We fully agree that guidance for the Chairpersons of the virtual Codex Committees is also very important to assist the Chairpersons especially in determining and reaching consensus. Malaysia also agrees with the subcommittee's view that each committee is unique and there could be different approaches to suit one or another, taking into consideration the agendas, prior arrangement of the Committee (physical WG, in session WG etc) and the host country capacity and resources.

As virtual conduct of a Codex meeting requires consent, and may need temporary suspensions to existing rules of procedure, Codex should consider obtaining blanket approval for all related Committees to avoid delay in its work and this information must be communicated clearly and openly to Codex members and observers.

Based on the recent virtual meeting of CAC43, Malaysia notes some challenges in executing a virtual Codex session and is of the view that guidance is also needed for the Host Countries of Codex Committees to assist in the smooth and effective conduct of a virtual Codex session. This includes a good internet connectivity, the availability of interpretation, the local times for participants at which meetings are held, meeting schedule, physical presence of Codex Secretariats and his/her continuous role in assisting the Chairs of Codex Committees, and opportunity for delegation interaction outside the meeting to facilitate consensus-building considering potentially complex virtual meeting sessions.

These points should be considered in the development of the procedural mechanisms that should be appropriately ready by the first virtual Codex Committee meeting in 2021.