

42nd Session of the Conference
Secret ballot vote for appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council

Arrangements for in-person voting in New York

Information Note – 14 June 2021

Introduction

1. The 42nd Session of the FAO Conference will take place virtually from 14-18 June 2021. Under Item 6 of the Provisional Agenda, the Conference will appoint the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for which [three Member Nations](#) have presented candidates.
2. As the appointment of the ICC requires a vote by secret ballot, special provisions have been made to hold a secret ballot election during a virtual meeting of the Conference.
3. New York has been identified by the Conference as a secondary voting location outside of FAO headquarters in Rome, due to the high number of Members represented in New York. The vote will take place in Conference Room E of the United Nations Headquarters in New York.
4. The in-person vote in New York will be held simultaneously with the vote in Rome and the votes in both locations will conclude at the same time. The tentative starting time, set as 09:00 hours EDT, is subject to change depending upon Conference discussions on the Timetable of the Conference prior to the election.
5. The New York Elections Officer is Mr. Shen Hong (shen.hong@fao.org; Mobile: +1-6319336429). He will be facilitating the elections process and, with the support and guidance of the Election Officer in Rome, as well as dedicated staff of the Legal Office of FAO. The role of the New York Elections Officer is to ensure that the provisions of the FAO Basic Texts related to voting and electoral procedures are adhered to.
6. A maximum of two ballots may be held in New York.

Before the vote

7. Members that wish to cast a vote in New York need to accredit their voting delegate to the 42nd Session of the Conference and include such voting delegates in the credentials of the Member delegation. Members can submit or amend their credentials and contact information through the FAO Members Gateway. Credential registration and amendment of credentials can also be sent through a Note Verbale to FAO, copying the accredited Member representation to FAO to FAO-Conference@fao.org. Any omission to include the voting delegate in the credentials of the delegation to the Conference will result in the delegate not being able to vote on behalf of the Member.

8. Please inform the Secretariat of the identity of the voting delegate or alternate in New York. Members are invited to compile the attached form, including the names of the voting delegates and alternates, individual email accounts and mobile telephone numbers. The Form can be submitted by email to FAO-C42-voting@fao.org. The information is requested to compile voter lists and address logistical aspects.
9. FAO General Rule XII.10(c) provides for the appointment of two tellers by the Chairperson of the Conference from among the delegates who are not directly interested in the election. In this case, tellers in New York are not expected to be delegates from the [European, and Latin America and Caribbean Regional Groups of FAO](#). The role of the tellers is to supervise the balloting procedure, count the ballot papers, decide on the validity of a ballot paper in any case of doubt, and certify the result of each ballot. The same tellers may be appointed for successive ballots. The Conference Secretariat will brief the four tellers, two in Rome and two in New York, on their role and duties at a time to be determined.
10. The candidates may appoint scrutineers to be present at, but not take part in, the vote count. In addition, the scrutineers may also oversee the voting area from a fixed location, but may not move through the voting area.
11. Article III.4 of the FAO Constitution stipulates that a Member which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the Conference if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years. Please refer to the Secretariat for more information in this regard.
12. Voting delegates will be divided into groups in alphabetical order of the Member they represent for entry into the voting area. Specific time slots will be designated to each group of voting delegates and these will be communicated by 16 June.

Election process

13. Voting delegates are invited to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to their designated voting time slot.
14. Before entry into the Conference Room, Secretariat staff will check the identity of voting delegates against the registration record of the FAO Conference. A valid ID refers to passports, national identity cards or driver licenses. UN ground passes will not be accepted as a valid form of ID.
15. Upon entry in the Voting Room, delegates will be asked to hand over any electronic recording devices, defined as any device which could be used to record images, including but not limited to cameras, mobile phones or smartwatches. Any such recording device will be placed in a sealed

envelope, marked with an indication of the Member. FAO staff will take custody of the electronic recording device and return the device upon the delegate's exit from the voting area.

16. At the entrance table, the teller will confirm that the delegate is entitled to vote through a check of the delegate's Conference Registration and valid ID, upon which the teller will issue a ballot paper. The delegate will then proceed to the voting booth to mark the ballot paper with an "X" next to the name of the candidate they wish to vote for. Please note that abstentions are considered ballot papers without any mark for any of the three candidates. The ballot paper will not have a separate entry for "Abstention." Pens will be available.
17. A delegate who has invalidated their ballot paper may, before leaving the voting area, request a new blank ballot paper from the NY Elections Officer. Upon receipt of the blank ballot paper, the invalidated ballot paper must be surrendered to the NY Elections Officer.
18. Upon leaving the voting booth, the delegate will proceed to the exit table where the ballot box is located and where the second teller is seated. The delegate will deposit the ballot paper in the ballot box. The teller will mark the roll-call sheet to record the deposit of the ballot in the ballot box by the delegate.
19. The delegate will leave the Voting Room and collect any electronic recording device deposited beforehand with FAO Staff.

Announcing the result

20. After the voting is concluded, the tellers will then proceed to count the votes. The tellers will communicate the result of the New York ballot to the tellers in Rome, where the results will be consolidated, and where the final result of the ballot will be established.
21. The Elections Officer in Rome will communicate the consolidated result of the ballot to the Chairperson of the Conference. The Chairperson shall call the session to order and read the results of the vote.

Second Ballot

22. General Rule XII of FAO establishes that if no majority of more than one half of the votes cast is achieved in the first ballot, a second ballot will be held among two remaining candidates. The candidate having received the lowest number of votes in the first ballot would be eliminated in a second ballot. In the event that no candidate has obtained a majority of the votes cast, before opening the second ballot the Chairperson may also ask whether any candidate wishes to withdraw.
23. The Chairperson will suspend the session for the time necessary to prepare new ballot papers before reconvening the session and proceeding with a subsequent ballot.

24. FAO New York Staff will inform Members, through email or mobile phone, of a second ballot. The time of a second ballot will also be announced. A second ballot would normally be held on the same day.
25. The entire procedure, as laid out in this note, and as stipulated in General Rule XII would be followed in the same way for any second ballot.

Annex: Summary on logistics

1. The election for ICC will take place on 17 June, with at tentatively start time at 9:00am EDT, at Conference Room E, the United Nations
2. All COVID-19 containment measures in the UN premises will be adhered to, including social distancing and the wearing of face masks. Voting booths will be sanitized after each voting delegate has left their booth.
3. Entry to UN premises require a valid grounds pass. Delegates are invited to enter into the United Nations Headquarters in New York through 42nd Street and 1st Avenue entrance. Voting delegates that do not have a valid UN Grounds pass should request a badge earliest possible through their Permanent Mission via the e-Delegates Portal of the Protocol Office at UNHQ in New York: <https://edelegate.un.int/>.
4. NB that the UN ground pass is not valid for identification to FAO for the purpose of voting. A passport, valid national identity card or a drivers' license will be accepted.
5. Conference Room E is located at -1 floor of the General Assembly Building. Voting delegates can refer to FAO staffs in the lobby of the UN Secretariat Building for guidance as needed.
6. No cloak room will be made available for delegates.
7. For general inquiries on the election, delegates can contact FAOLON-Director@fao.org.
8. All meeting documentation, including the provisional agenda, is available online at: <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/conference/c2021/list-of-documents/en/>

