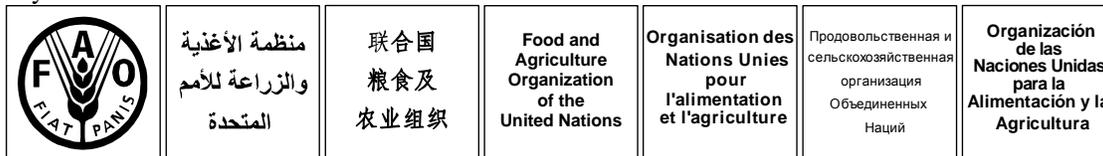


May 2012



FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE NEAR EAST

Thirty-first Session

Rome, 14-18 May 2012

INFORMATION NOTE

I. CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS

The **Thirty-first FAO Regional Conference (NERC-31)** for the Near East will be held in the Red Room at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 14 to 18 May 2012. The Conference will start with a three-day meeting for Senior Officers from 14 to 16 May, followed by a Ministerial Meeting on 17 and 18 May. The Opening Session of the Senior Officers Meeting will take place at 09:00 hours on Monday, 14 May 2012. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Ministerial Meeting will take place at 09:00 hours on Thursday, 17 May 2012.

The normal working hours of the Conference will be 9:00 to 12:00 hours and 14:30 to 17:30 hours, unless otherwise decided by the Conference.

An "Order of the Day" circular will be issued daily by the Conference Secretary, giving detailed information of the Conference business, timetable of meetings, items to be discussed and other information of general interest.

The Provisional Annotated Agenda (doc. NERC/12/1) has been dispatched to Member Countries and other participants along with the Invitation Letter. Special Events on issues of interest to delegates are scheduled to take place during the Conference and will be outlined in the Order of the Day.

The Secretary of the Conference is Mr. Nasredin Hag Elamin, Senior Policy Officer, FAO Regional Office for the Near East. He will be assisted by a number of FAO staff, whose names and functions will be included in a list to be issued on the first day of the Conference.

A. LANGUAGES

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in Arabic, English and French. The conference documents will also be issued in these three languages.

B. PRESS LIAISON AND INFORMATION

For the duration of the Conference, the FAO Information Officer, assisted by a team from the Conference, will maintain contacts with the press and be responsible for matters concerning relaying relevant Conference information to the public.

Journalists will be provided accreditation upon presenting a letter of assignment from their editor or employer to the FAO Information Officer at the registration desk at the Conference venue.

C. DOCUMENTATION

The working documents will be sent to all governments and invited observers before the start of the Conference. Documents drafted during the Conference will be available at the Korean Conference Centre, outside the Conference hall. The Centre will also deliver mail messages and deal with general inquiries.

D. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS AND AMENDMENTS

Delegates who wish to submit draft recommendations or other documents requiring a decision by the Conference are requested to hand their texts in Arabic, English or French to the Conference Secretary, if possible in four printouts. Delegates wishing to circulate other written material related to the Agenda of the Conference are requested to deliver at least 40 copies in Arabic, 20 copies in English and 10 copies in French to the Secretariat for distribution.

ADVANCE SUBMISSION OF TEXTS OF SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS

If delegates wish to circulate speeches or statements they are kindly requested to submit three typed copies of the texts to the Secretariat of the Conference in advance.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence concerning the 31st Regional Conference should be addressed to the **Conference Secretary** as follows:

- i. Mr. Nasredin Hag Elamin
Secretary of the 31st FAO Regional Conference for the Near East
FAO Regional Office for the Near East, P.O. Box 2223, Cairo, Egypt
Tel.: (+202) 3331 6000, Ext. 2720 or direct line (+202) 33316171
Fax: (+202) 37495981 or 33373419
Cellular Phone: (+20) 1000049402
E-mail: NERC31@fao.org

And copied to:

- ii. The Conference **Liaison Officer in Rome**, Ms Isabel Mendez.
Fax: (+39) 0657056099
E-mail: Isabel.Mendez@fao.org
Tel.: (+39) 06570 55895
Cellular Phone: (+39) 3665783893

During the Conference, the address of the **Conference Secretary** is:

Mr. Nasredin Hag Elamin
Conference Secretary
31st FAO Regional Conference for the Near East
Mobile : (+39) 3665783892

II. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

A. FORMALITIES FOR ENTRY INTO ITALY

Participants requiring entry visa to Italy are advised to apply for their visas from the Italian Consulate or competent Diplomatic Mission in their country before leaving for Rome, minimum of **three weeks** prior to the date of travel. Participants coming from countries with no diplomatic missions for Italy or competent Diplomatic Mission are kindly requested to fill in the attached Personal Data Form (Appendix B), and provide a copy of the first pages of their valid passports (**the passport that will be used to enter Italy**) and full travel itinerary to the Conference Liaison Officer in Rome (by email or fax), at the contact address mentioned under item F-ii above. This passport information should be dispatched at least 20 days before the Conference date, with a copy to the Conference Secretary in Cairo.

Participants are advised to provide, at least two weeks prior to arrival, the name of carrier, flight number, time of arrival and other related information to the Conference Secretary, to the Conference Liaison Officer and to Protocol@fao.org.

B. HOTELS

For hotels in Rome, participants may consider contacting, among others, Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT), e-mail: faotravel@cwbook.it; tel. (+39) 06 57055970.

C. TRAVEL FACILITIES

Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) is the official travel agency of FAO. Their offices, located on the Ground Floor of Building D (Room D074), are open from Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 17.00 hours non-stop. For further information, participants may contact CWT on extension 55970 (or 06 57055970 from outside FAO) or by e-mail: faotravel@cwbook.it.

For emergency requirements outside business hours, CWT offer a 24-Hour Emergency Service dedicated to providing traveller assistance (Tel: from within Italy 800 - 871932; and +44 208 7579000 from all other countries).

All Conference participants are advised to finalize, at an early date, return travel arrangements. Immediately upon arrival in Rome, participants are advised to contact CWT at the Conference venue for confirmation of their departure date and time.

D. FOREIGN EXCHANGE AND BANKING

The national currency in Italy is the Euro (EUR). In daily dealings, foreign currency can be exchanged at the official rate at hotels or banks. The bank rate at present is approximately EUR1= USD1.34. Internationally-recognized travellers' cheques and credit cards are accepted in hotels, major shops and restaurants.

E. MEDICAL SERVICES AND SECURITY

Medical and first aid services will be available at the Conference premises. For medical emergencies, dial 30 from all in-house telephones. For all other medical services, call extension 53577 from in-house telephones (06-5705-3577 from outside FAO Headquarters).

Strict security measures are observed at the FAO Headquarters. Metal detectors are in operation at the Building A entrance. Participants are requested to wear their Building Passes at all times. Participants are advised not to leave briefcases or any valuable items unattended in conference rooms.

Participants are advised to carry their valuables in a safe place, especially on public transport. There might be pickpockets on the street, the underground and on buses and trams. Once Participants have checked into their hotels, it is advisable to leave important documents such as passports in the hotel safe and to carry a photocopy.

The following numbers may be useful in case of emergency outside FAO Headquarters: Medical Emergencies 118; General Emergencies 113; Fire 115; Ambulance 118; City Physician on Call (Medico di Guardia) 06-58201030.

III. LOGISTICS

A. REGISTRATION

All delegates and observers are required to register. For Member countries and Permanent Observers kindly complete online registration which is available through the Permanent Representatives Website (PRWS) at: <http://permreps.fao.org/>. Online registration requires the uploading of a recent passport-size digital photograph in digital format (JPEG, white background, 26 mm (width) x 33 mm (height) or 190 pixels (width) x 248pixels (height), not to exceed 100 kb). For observers, kindly complete and send the form in the Appendix A with a passport-size photo to the Conference Secretariat in Rome and Cairo (as indicated under item E above. We invite all participants to pre-register in order to avoid long queues upon arrival at the Conference venue.

It is possible to register at the Conference site. The registration desk will be open from 14 to 18 May from 8:00 to 16:00. Only registered participants will be issued special badges, which will permit them to enter the Conference meeting halls.

On the first day of each meeting, participants are requested to use the Viale Aventino entrance to FAO near the metro. Participants will be invited by Security personnel to proceed through a scanning machine in the Visitors Centre at the top of a short flight of steps, before being directed to the Turkish Registration lounge in Building A to collect the badge.

Inside the Turkish Registration Lounge participants should collect their badge (if registration form has been submitted) or register and take the photo. A valid identity document will need to be presented to registration officials to collect the Building Pass.

Lost Building Passes should be reported without delay to the FAO Security Office.

B. ACCESS TO CONFERENCE VENUE

FAO Headquarters is located on Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, in front of the Circo Massimo. It can be reached by car, bus, tram and metro line B (Circo Massimo stop).

There are six buildings in FAO Headquarters, all interconnected. The Red Room is in Building A.

Pass-holding visitors may use the Building A Main Entrance (Viale Aventino, Metro exit) to enter the site. No other entry/exit points in other parts of the buildings can be used. They may return through the scanning machines in the Visitors Centre.

C. SPECIAL ACCESS

FAO Headquarters are accessible to disabled persons with wheelchairs. A lift is provided in Building A. Restroom facilities for disabled visitors are located in Building A on the ground, first and third floors near the meeting rooms.

D. PARKING FACILITIES

Limited parking is available for the use of Participants to FAO meetings. It is, however, possible to park in the vicinity of FAO Headquarters.

E. CAR RENTAL

Participants requiring cars can make their own arrangements with local car hire firms. Some car rental companies have offices at both Ciampino and Fiumicino Airports (open from Monday to Sunday, 09.00 hours to 18.30 hours). Following are recommended Car Rental Places:

- Avis: Fiumicino Airport, Ciampino Airport, Termini Station and eleven offices in town. Information: Tel. 199-100-133 Bookings: Tel. (06)-419-99.
- Eurodollar: Fiumicino Airport, Ciampino Airport and five offices in town. Bookings: Tel. (06)-228-1111.
- Europcar: Fiumicino Airport, Ciampino Airport, Termini Station and eight offices in town. Bookings: Milan Tel. (02)-703-99700.
- Hertz: Fiumicino Airport, Ciampino Airport, Termini Station and four offices in town. Bookings: Tel. 199-112211.
- Maggiore: Fiumicino Airport, Ciampino Airport, Termini Station and five offices in town. Bookings: Tel. 848-867067.

Car rental can also be arranged at FAO Headquarters:

- Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT), located on the Ground Floor of Building D, Room D074, offer automobile services including car rentals (9:00 to 17:00). For further information, participants may contact CWT on extension 55970 (or 06 57055970 from outside FAO) or by e-mail: faotravel@cwbook.it.

F. TAXIS

Participants are advised to use only licensed taxis with meters. Surcharges are added for baggage, night runs, Sundays and holidays. The Main Reception (Ground Floor, Building A) will assist participants to request taxis.

Participants can also call Radio Taxi Service (Tel. 06-3570 or 06-4994). Upon calling, the taxi company operator will ask for the caller's telephone number and will give the caller the taxi's identification number (which will be marked on both sides of the car), as well as the estimated time it will take to reach the caller.

G. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Tickets for public transport should be purchased in advance and are available from underground stations, tobacco shops and newspaper kiosks as well as from the Newsstand at FAO Headquarters (Ground Floor, Building B, across from the Banca Intesa San Paolo).

Tickets cost 1 Euro, and may be used once for underground transport and unlimited bus/tram travel within the ticket validation time of 75 minutes. Tickets are validated upon entering bus/tram or at the point of entrance to the Metro. Day tickets valid for the entire bus/tram and metro network can also be purchased.

The public buses in Rome are managed by the Azienda per i Trasporti Autoferrotranviari del Comune di Roma (ATAC). Access onto buses/trams is both from the rear and front doors. Tickets should be purchased in advance and immediately validated in one of the machines in the bus or tram. Bus/tram stops can be distinguished by a yellow or green metal post.

There are two underground lines in Rome: Line A and Line B. The stops are marked by a red and white "M" sign. Termini Station is the only Metro station where the two lines intersect. The Metro stop for FAO is Circo Massimo (Line B). Tickets must be purchased before boarding.

IV. CONFERENCE VENUES

A. CATERING AND DINING FACILITIES

The FAO Headquarters offers dining and snack bar facilities where participants may sit down for a meal, or order a quick snack and beverage. On the other hand, many of the local restaurants and shops are located on Viale Aventino.

The FAO Cafeteria, located on the eighth floor, Building B, is available to Participants from 12.00 hours to 14.30 hours for lunch. The free-flow cafeteria offers a selection of hors d'oeuvres, first and second courses, grill and salads.

The FAO Restaurant, located on the eighth floor, Building C, offers a daily menu and à la carte service. Please telephone ext. 56823 (Tel. 06-5705-6823) for reservations.

B. SLOVAK BUSINESS CENTRE

The Slovak Business Centre is a multi-functional workspace equipped with phone, fax and PC facilities, located on the Ground Floor of Building B (B013), extension 57090 (Tel. 06-5705-7090) and comprises a reception area, Internet workstations, a lounge area, and a small meeting room. No food is permitted in this facility.

C. WIFI COVERAGE

FAO offers WiFi coverage in all Meeting Rooms.

Participants with a laptop or Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) which has Wireless Local Area Network (LAN) capabilities, conforming to the 802.11b or 802.11g standards, may use this free service.

There are three steps to take in order to connect to the service:

1. Turning on laptop or PDA, while in one of the WiFi areas.
2. Allowing laptop or PDA to detect the network "guest_internet".
3. Opening a browser and trying to connect to an Internet site. The username and password can be obtained from the documents desk.

D. INTERNET POINT AND DOWNLOADING OF DOCUMENTATION

This service point is available for participants in the David Lubin Library, located on the ground floor of Building A, Room A.022bis.A. The computers in this area allow access to the FAO Web site, the Internet in general and personal e-mail accounts.

Governing Body Documents are available on the FAO Internet Web Pages and can be accessed by clicking on Governing Bodies on the FAO home page.

E. BANKING AND CURRENCY EXCHANGE FACILITIES

The currency of Italy is the Euro. The Banca Intesa San Paolo, located on the Ground Floor, Building B, is open from 08:35 hours to 16:35 hours. The Banca Popolare di Sondrio, located on the Ground Floor, Building D, is open from 08:30 to 16:30 hours. In addition to the banks, the Italian Post Office located next to the Banca Intesa San Paolo also processes postal/money orders. Cash dispensers (ATM) for credit card withdrawals are located at the entrance of the Banks and the Post Office.

F. FAO SALES POINT

The FAO Sales Point is located in front of the Banca Intesa San Paolo (Ground Floor, Building B) and is open from 09.00 hours to 12.30 hours. A selection of recent FAO publications and CD-ROMs and an assortment of FAO Medals, Coins and Stamps, as well as logo and commemorative items can be purchased here.

G. NEWSSTAND

The Newsstand is located on the Ground Floor of Building B near the Banca Intesa San Paolo, and offers international newspapers and magazines, as well as postcards, maps, and a large selection of periodicals. The Newsstand is open from 07.00 hours to 17.30 hours. For more information, dial extension 53273 (Tel. 06-5705-3).

H. WEATHER

During the month of May, the temperature varies from about 22°C to 30°C

I. ELECTRICITY

The voltage in Italy is 220 volts AC. Plugs used are CEE 7/16 (Europlug).

J. SHOPPING

Shops in Italy are usually open from 09.00 hours to 13.00 hours and from 15.30 hours to 19.30 hours. However, many of the shops in the downtown area also remain open during the lunch break.

K. PRAYER ROOM

Prayer Room is available for use by Conference participants in Room A250 Ter.

APPENDIX A**REGISTRATION FORM**

This form should be submitted **no later than 1 May 2012**, together with a recent passport size photo.

PERSONAL DATA

**PHOTO must be
attached**

Name of Organization:

Family Name:

First Name:

 Ms Mr**Official Title:**

Official Address:

Nationality

Arrival date:

Departure date:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Date

APPENDIX B**PASSPORT DETAILS**

First Name	
Father's Name	
Family Name	
Date of Birth	
Place of Birth	
Nationality	
Type of Passport	
Passport No.	
Date & Place of Issue	
Expiry Date	
Occupation	
Place visa to be issued	
Duration of stay in Sudan	
The last entry date to Sudan	
Travel itinerary (must not include any other Schengen country)	
Details of arrival flight	Flight Number: Date and hour of arrival: