

**Questions and Answers on the proposal to convene the 44th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission as a virtual meeting and mechanism for convening elections.**

**Prepared by the Codex Secretariat  
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***Q. How will the letter regarding endorsement of a virtual meeting of the 44th session of the Codex Alimentarius commission be shared with members?.***

**A.** The letter will be distributed to all Codex Contact Points through the official Codex mailing list (Codex-L). It is being sent for the action of all Members and for the information of all Observers. If your Codex Contact Point has not received the letter, they should contact the Codex Secretariat at [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org).

***Q. How should a member respond to the letter?***

**A.** In order to respond to the letter requesting endorsement of the proposed way forward the Codex contact point should log into the Codex website and use the related link in the dashboard to register the response not later than 7 September 2021, 23:59(CEST). In case of any problem, contact the Codex Secretary ([Codex-Secretary@fao.org](mailto:Codex-Secretary@fao.org)).

***Q. Do Observers need to endorse the proposed way forward?***

**A.** No, it is only members who need to respond on endorsement of the way forward. The letter on endorsement is shared with observers for information only.

***Q. Do all members have to agree for the CAC44 to proceed virtually?***

**A.** Two thirds of the membership have to respond positively in order for CAC44 to proceed virtually. Therefore it is critical that all Members take the time to respond to the letter.

***Q. Will the meeting dates of CAC44 be changed from those currently in the calendar, such as adding another day for adoption of the report, in case of a virtual session.***

**A.** In the case where the membership agrees to a virtual CAC44 several days will be added the following week to ensure have adequate time for report adoption. These will be Monday 15th November for discussions and Wednesday 17 and Thursday 18 November for report adoption.

***Q. It is proposed that elections would be conducted by secret ballot through in-person voting by appointment in Geneva. What does that mean?***

**A.** This means that voting would be conducted by appointment, through a physical secret ballot in the presence of tellers and scrutineers at a designated location. In preparing for the FAO Conference, FAO Members considered that, in the prevailing circumstances, this voting modality was the most closely aligned to the established procedures under GRO Rule XII.

***Q. Where will the voting take place?***

Geneva is considered as the location that would ensure the utmost inclusiveness amongst Codex Members. Considering the joint nature of the Codex Alimentarius as a FAO/WHO body, a comparison was made between Rome and Geneva and it was determined that only fifteen (15) Members were not represented in Geneva, as opposed to fifty-three (53) Members without a representation in Rome. In addition, only four (4) Codex Members would appear not to have a representation in Europe.

***Q. How can those members without an official presence in Geneva vote?***

**A.** With a view to guaranteeing the principle of inclusiveness, Members without a representation in Geneva would be encouraged to ensure that their delegation is composed in a manner that allows them to cast their vote physically in Geneva, for example by nominating any person to cast its vote on its behalf. In fact, the GROs do not place any restriction upon the appointments that Members may make with respect to their delegation for a Session, bearing in mind, however, that Article III, paragraph 3 of the FAO Constitution provides that “*No delegate may represent more than one Member Nation or Associate Member*”. Alternatively, those Members without a representation in Geneva could potentially consider travelling to Geneva, if permitted by the travel restrictions at that time.

***Q. When will we have more information about logistical details about how the elections will be conducted?***

**A.** Assuming the proposed way forward is endorsed the Codex secretariat will be working closely with FAO and WHO on the logistical arrangements for voting and will provide updates to the Membership as they become available?

***Q. When will we receive information on the nominations for the upcoming elections.***

**A.** The nomination process for the elections will aim to mirror as much as possible the nomination process that is used in a physical meeting. By following that approach the formal call for nominations for the position of chairperson would only open on the first day of CAC44 and close at the beginning of the session on Day 2. then on Day 2 the list of nominations would be announced, followed by voting. When voting for the chairperson is completed and the result announced, the nominations for the position of vice-chairpersons would likely be opened on Day 3 and close at the beginning of the session on Day 4. Then on Day 4 the list of nominations would be announced, followed by voting. With regards to Members elected on a Geographical basis, the nominations for the members would likely be opened on Day 5 and close at the beginning of the session on Day 6. Then on Day 6 the list of nominations would be announced, followed by voting. In any case where the list of nominations does not exceed the number of seats available, elections could proceed by acclamation.

***Q. Who can I ask if I have any questions regarding the endorsement process?***

**A.** In case of any questions you can contact the contact the Codex Secretary at [Codex-Secretary@fao.org](mailto:Codex-Secretary@fao.org)