

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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**Agenda item 3**

**CAC/43 CRD38**  
**Original Language Only**

## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

#### Forty-third Session

#### *Comments from Kenya*

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

Kenya would like to thank the Chair of the Sub-Committee and the Codex Secretariat for the intermediate report for CAC43 consideration. Kenya acknowledges and recognizes the tremendous efforts made by the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO to progress Codex work in the challenging and unprecedented circumstances arising from COVID-19 pandemic.

Kenya appreciates the importance of adaptation to progress the Codex work in the prevailing circumstances and to better understand the extent to which the current rules and procedures are fit for purpose. Kenya supports the use of already developed Codex electronic tools to improve its resilience and to ensure the implementation of its Strategic Plan 2020-2025 despite cancellations of physical meetings in the year 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Kenya shares same concerns that it may not be possible to meet physically during the first half of 2021. In this regard, Kenya is focused to ensure that there is due consideration of all of the alternative ways of working when physical meetings are not possible. Albeit, Kenya acknowledges the challenges associated with the organisation of virtual meetings and support that the Codex Secretariat, in cooperation with FAO and WHO, informs the Sub-Committee about the changes to working mechanisms needed to implement meetings with the help of electronic tools.

Kenya takes note of the subcommittee report and submits that for the convening of virtual meetings to progress member countries may need to discuss and agree on jurisdictions where certain online platforms are restricted. It is noted that in some member countries access to internet connections is hindered by inadequate technological infrastructure.

The Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) in liaison with Codex secretariat may need to consider developing guidelines for virtual Codex meetings just like other international standards setting bodies<sup>1</sup> have progressed.

The potential risks associated with virtual meetings should be anticipated and addressed before hand. This may not be well handled across the member countries with challenges of internet connectivity and cyber security.

Kenya reserves the adoption of a hybrid system as recommended which incorporates both physical and virtual meeting participation. There is potential compromise of the Codex core values of inclusiveness and transparency.

In the events of virtual meetings that may restrict travel and participation from particular Regions, Kenya expresses and shares concerns that codex meetings are mainly technical and diplomatic missions representation may not be adequate.

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<sup>1</sup> ISO/IEC

Kenya recommends to integrate virtual meetings in working of the EWGs and committees working by correspondence to enhance their work output.

Kenya also takes cognizant of the different time zones and recommends that virtual meetings to be kept short and the agenda spread over a long period.