



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

6:00am to 6:45am EST
23 and 24 November 2020

**MINUTES OF THE BUREAU MEETING HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SECOND
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND
FIRST EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING
AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA AND NAGOYA PROTOCOLS**

1. The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties held a meeting by teleconference on 23 and 24 November 2020 via GotoMeeting to consider progress of the second extraordinary meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity and first extraordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the parties to the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols. Specifically, in follow up to its meeting on 19 November, the meeting was convened to address the concern raised by Brazil that led to the breaking of the silence procedure during the extraordinary meetings of the Convention and its Protocols, and discuss possible solutions to move forward before the re-opening of the extraordinary meetings. The meeting also heard an update on the status of credentials for the extraordinary meetings.

2. The teleconferences were attended by the following members of the COP Bureau and substitutes (in the case that a person did not attend the two sessions, attendance is indicated by a or b respectively):

Presidency: H.E. Yasmine Fouad (Egypt); Mr. Hamdallah Zedan (Egypt);

Africa: Mr. Eric Okoree (Ghana) (a); Mr. Melesse Maryo (Ethiopia)(b);

Asia and the Pacific: Mr. Vinod Mathur (India); Ms. Leina El-Awadhi (Kuwait);

Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms. Helena Jeffery Brown (Antigua and Barbuda); Ms Rita Zaghoul (Costa Rica, representing H.E. Minister Andrea Meza Murillo); Mr. Joaquín Salzberg (Argentina, substitute for Costa Rica for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol);

Central and Eastern Europe: Ms. Teona Karchava (Georgia); Ms. Elvana Ramaj (Albania);

Western Europe and Others: Ms. Gabriele Obermayr (Austria); Ms. Rosemary Paterson (New Zealand); and Ms. Marie Haraldstad (Norway, substitute for New Zealand for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol);

Ex-officio: Ms. Charlotta Sörqvist (Sweden), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation; Mr. Hesiquio Benítez (Mexico), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice; and Mr. Basile van Havre (Canada) Co-chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;

Observers: Mr. Liu Ning (China) and Ms. Yueyu Zou (China), COP 15 host representatives; Ambassador Mohamed Gad (Egypt); Mr. Omar Choukry (Egypt)(a); Mr. Ayman Amin (Egypt)(a); Mr. Mohamed Khalil (Egypt)(a); Ms. Mitzi Valente da Costa (Brazil);

3. The Secretariat was represented by Ms. Elizabeth Maruma-Mrema, Executive Secretary; Mr. David Cooper, Deputy Executive Secretary; Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Director of Implementation Support Division; Mr. Worku Yifru, Senior Legal Officer; Mr. Ide Ahmed, Finance Officer (a); Ms. Gudrun Fosse, Head of Administration, Finance and Conference Services Division (b).

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The teleconference was opened on 23 November 2020 at 8:07am Montreal time by H.E. Dr. Yasmine Fouad, President of the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The President began by welcoming the Bureau members and thanking Ms. Mitzi Valente da Costa from Brazil for accepting her invitation to attend the Bureau's teleconference on this occasion. She noted the criticality of the situation and expressed hope that a solution to address Brazil's concerns would be found as soon as possible in order to move forward with the process.

ITEM 2. DISCUSSION AND PROPOSAL

5. The President invited Ms. Valente da Costa to take the floor and provide further explanation of Brazil's concerns.

6. Ms. Valente da Costa thanked the President and the Bureau for the opportunity to discuss their concern and indicated that it was not Brazil's intention to halt or not approve the budget decision. However, she noted that since their concern was a factual matter, stating there was no consensus on holding virtual meetings of the subsidiary bodies and that it should not prejudice the outcomes of the discussion on the matter, she believed that there should be no resistance to include the footnote. She reported that the Brazilian delegate had been excluded from the informal consultations on the budget towards the end of the consultations, as he did not receive the invitation for the meetings.

7. After thanking Ms. Valente da Costa for her remarks, the President invited comments from the floor.

8. Members of the Bureau began by thanking both the Presidency and the Secretariat for their efforts in trying to resolve this situation. The Bureau reiterated their deep concern and disappointment with the breaking of the silence and highlighted the critical importance of adopting an interim budget for 2021 in order to continue implementing decisions of the COP and enable the Secretariat to operate. Members of the Bureau expressed confidence in the transparent and inclusive work of the informal budget group led by Ambassador Spencer Thomas and noted that robust discussions had taken place in the Bureau regarding the modalities of the meetings of SBSTTA and SBI with good compromises reached. Furthermore, most of the members of the Bureau considered that Brazil's concern and request did not relate directly to the purpose of the extraordinary meetings, therefore most of the Bureau members did not agree with amending the budget document and adding the footnote, as proposed by Brazil. However, the GRULAC region stated they could accept the footnote if this was the only solution provided to move forward with the adoption of the budget.

9. After listening to the views expressed by the Bureau and acknowledging that the majority did not agree with adding the footnote in the budget document, the President proposed as a solution to include a statement that addressed the concern of Brazil in the report of the extraordinary meetings, along the lines of the following:

10. *"The approval of the budget is without prejudice to the format and organization of work of negotiating sessions of the SBSTTA and SBI, and does not prejudice the outcome of continued discussions among Parties, through the Bureau, on the matter."*

11. Ms. Valente da Costa indicated that she would need to receive the proposed statement in writing so that she could consult with her government. Accordingly, the President transmitted the proposed statement in writing to Ms. Valente da Costa as soon as the meeting ended and due to the time sensitivity

of the matter, requested Ms. Valente da Costa to provide, if possible, a response later in the day and requested the Bureau reconvene the following day at the same time to finalize the discussion.

12. The Bureau reconvened on 24 November 2020 at 8:20am.

13. The President, H.E. Yasmine Fouad, informed the participants that, after a few edits and additions, Brazil had decided to include a statement in the report of the extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties as follows:

14. *‘The representative of Brazil made the following statement and requested that it be included in the report of the meeting: “The approval of the budget is without prejudice to the format and organization of work of negotiating sessions of the SBSTTA and SBI. We note that there is currently no consensus among CBD Parties on the convenience and feasibility of holding formal virtual meetings and negotiations” ‘*

15. The President thanked Ms. Valente da Costa for Brazil’s prompt response to the proposal and cooperation. She also thanked the Bureau members for their support and commitment in finding a timely solution, highlighting Egypt’s commitment to the process and to arriving to COP 15 with a strong post-2020 roadmap.

16. Members of the Bureau and the Executive Secretary also expressed their appreciation to the President for her leadership and hard work in resolving the matter.

ITEM 3. STATUS OF CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

17. The President invited Ms. Helena Brown from Antigua and Barbuda to report to the Bureau on the status of credentials for the extraordinary meetings. Ms. Brown informed the Bureau that, to date, the second extraordinary meeting of the Convention had 136 registered Parties of which 96 had submitted valid credentials. She then noted that the first extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol had 119 registered Parties of which 84 had submitted valid credentials. Finally, she informed the Bureau that the first extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol had 92 registered Parties of which 64 had submitted valid credentials.

ITEM 4. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

18. The President thanked the participants for the valuable discussion and closed the meeting on 24 November 2020 at 8:40am EST.