



## NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2019/033

Geneva, 12 June 2019

CONCERNING:

### Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

#### New dates and venue

Reacting to the dreadful bombings of 21 April 2019, the Members of the Standing Committee expressed their strong solidarity with the Government and people of Sri Lanka and agreed to postpone the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18) originally scheduled to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 23 May to 3 June 2019, as well as the associated 71st and 72nd meetings of the Standing Committee (SC71 and SC72).

In close consultation with the Standing Committee and after discussions with the host country (Sri Lanka) and careful consideration of the report of the mission of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security to Sri Lanka to assess the security situation on the ground, the Secretariat concluded that considering the security and other concerns expressed by many Standing Committee Members and the very tight security conditions under which the meetings would have been held in Sri Lanka, CoP18, SC71 and SC72 should be held in Geneva, Switzerland at the earliest possible date.

The new venue is in line with the affirmation of the Parties in Resolution Conf. 17.2 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2017-2019*.

#### 1. Dates and venue

The 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be held in Geneva, Switzerland from **17 to 28 August** at the following address:

**Palexpo**  
Centre de Congrès  
Route François-Peyrot 30  
CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex  
Geneva, Switzerland

<https://www.palexpo.ch/en/our-congress-center>

The 71st and 72nd meetings of the Standing Committee will be held at the same venue on 16 August and 28 August respectively.

#### 2. Registration

Existing registration of all participants will be maintained. All participants that were accredited to attend the meeting of the CoP in Sri Lanka will automatically receive a new priority pass and visa letter for Switzerland in the coming days. Please make sure that you bring the LATEST Priority Pass to the CoP.

### Parties

Parties are kindly requested to send a new nomination letter to the Secretariat at [registration@cites.org](mailto:registration@cites.org) **only if they are adding new delegates**. There is no need to send a new nomination letter if some previously registered delegates are unable to attend the rescheduled meeting.

Observers (non-Parties, United Nations and its specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and private sector)

In the event that an already registered observer delegate is unable to attend the rescheduled meeting, his or her organization may nominate a replacement by sending a new nomination letter and registering the delegate before 18 July 2019. It will not be possible for new observer organizations to register.

The UN administered system is currently unable to process the reimbursement of participation fees paid by observers. The Secretariat suggests considering them as credit for future meetings.

### **3. Credentials for Parties**

Parties are reminded that, in accordance with Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties, representatives of Parties must have been granted powers by a proper authority to represent the Party at a meeting. The Standing Committee has endorsed *Guidance for submission of credentials of representatives of Parties to CoP meetings*, which can be found on the [CITES website](#). Please note that all credentials must be issued by the Head of State, the Head of Government or the Minister of Foreign Affairs or an alternate signatory (in a temporary or acting capacity).

All credentials that have already been sent remain valid provided that the signatory of the credentials is still acting in the same capacity and that the Representative (head of delegation), any Alternative Representative (alternate head of delegation) or Advisers have not changed.

Originals can be delivered by post to the CITES Secretariat prior to the meeting or at the meeting of the Conference of the Parties. All credentials should be sent no later than 10 August 2019.

### **4. Sponsored delegates**

Sponsored delegates will be contacted directly by the CITES Secretariat. Prompt response to the Secretariat's queries is essential to ensure the timely organization of their travel.

### **5. Hotel reservations**

Delegates, including sponsored delegates, are responsible for making their own hotel reservations and should do so as soon as possible. The Secretariat will post a list of hotels near the venue (at the airport and on the French side of the border) on the CITES website shortly.

### **6. Visas**

**Participants are responsible for obtaining their own visas and should do so as soon as possible.**

Information on visa requirements are available [here](#). All participants that were accredited to attend the meeting of the CoP in Sri Lanka will automatically receive a letter of invitation for visa purposes in the coming days.

### **7. Office space, meeting rooms and exhibition space**

Due to space constraints, there will be no office space, private meeting rooms or exhibition spaces available for rent. Participants are kindly invited to contact nearby hotels to rent office spaces and meeting rooms.

**8. Side events**

The Secretariat hopes to be able to maintain all previously reserved side events. Side event organizers are invited to contact the Secretariat ([maroun.abi-chahine@cites.org](mailto:maroun.abi-chahine@cites.org)) if they wish to cancel their event. The Secretariat will inform the side event organizers of the new dates and meeting rooms for their event. No new side events and no changes of room or date will be accepted.

**9. Media**

All media queries should be directed to the Secretariat's Programme and Communication Officer at [yuan.liu@un.org](mailto:yuan.liu@un.org).

**10. Conference documentation**

All working documents for SC71, SC72 and CoP18 are already posted on the CITES website. The Secretariat aims to make CoP18 a *papersmart* meeting. Access to meeting documents will be provided electronically at the venue. The new working programme [CoP18 Doc. 3 (Rev. 2)] will be posted shortly.