End of the second term of the Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands, Martha Rojas Urrego

15 July 2022

The Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands, Ms Martha Rojas Urrego will complete her second term on 21 August 2022 and Contracting Parties to the Convention and Secretariat would like to thank her for her leadership and commitment.

During her tenure, Ms Rojas Urrego led the successful organization of two Conferences of the Parties and seven sessions of the Standing Committee, and strengthened the work of the Secretariat in its support to Parties, including for the designation of 184 new Wetlands of International Importance.

She has also been instrumental in increasing the visibility of and leveraging the Convention in the global policy agenda for conservation and sustainable use, including the development the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in tackling climate change, in mainstreaming gender equality, and in delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals. Notable highlights include the adoption in 2021 of UN General Assembly resolution 75/317, designating 2 February each year as World Wetlands Day, and the designation of the Convention as a co-custodian of the indicator of the Sustainable Development Goals that tracks the extent of wetlands, using inventories and national reports from Contracting Parties.

At the closing of the resumed 59th session of the Standing Committee, held 24-27 May 2022, the Chair of the Standing Committee and Contracting Parties joined to offer heartfelt thanks to Ms Rojas Urrego for her leadership, hard work and dedication over the past two triennia and particularly her efforts to modernize the running of the Convention and improve its visibility.

"Martha’s contribution to the Convention on Wetlands and its Secretariat is immense and tremendous," said Chair of the Standing Committee, Mohamed Saif Al Afkham. "Her support for Parties and leadership of the Secretariat during these challenging years are appreciated by Contracting Parties. She worked passionately to increase the visibility of the Convention, and she succeeded. I wish her all the best in her future endeavours."

Her work as Secretary General of the Convention has advanced the conservation and wise use of all wetlands globally.

Ms Rojas Urrego’s last day in office will be 29 July 2022.
The process for selecting and appointing the next Secretary General started last year and is underway. Mr Jonathan Barzdo will take the position of Secretary General ad interim starting 2 August 2022.

We would like to thank Ms Rojas Urrego for her committed service through a crucial period of the Convention’s work, and wish her the very best for the future.