

## **Proposals for amendments to the COP Rules of Procedure**

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to approve these amendments to the Rules of Procedure for consideration at COP10.

1. Two issues have arisen concerning the current COP Rules of Procedure as adopted at the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP9), which have led to proposals for amendments to the Rules of Procedure to be adopted at COP10.
2. In its report to COP9 (annex I to the COP9 Report) the Credentials Committee, in the light of its experiences, proposed an amendment to Rule 18.1 concerning procedures for a change to the head of delegation during a COP. The Credentials Committee recommended that this rule be amended to read as follows:

“Any changes to the head of the delegation during the COP may be made by the current head of delegation, alternate head of delegation, or the embassy of the party in question, provided that the newly designated head of delegation is properly identified as a delegate in the original credentials duly authorized by the appropriate official. If a person not identified in the initial letter of credentials is proposed as a new head of delegation, that change would need to be done through issuance of new credentials in accordance with rule 18.2”.

3. On a related issue, the COP9 Credentials Committee also reported the following issue concerning credentials from certain central Asian Parties:

“Four Central Asian countries (Azerbaijan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) were unable to produce valid credentials due to the fact that Ministers of Foreign Affairs of these countries only sign documents addressed to Heads of State and the Secretary General of the United Nations. The Kyrgyz Republic has presented an original with a seal, however without the required signature. On 18 October 2005, the Secretariat had drawn the attention of the relevant authorities to Rule 18, paragraph 2 of the Rules of Procedures pointing out that the signature of the Minister of Foreign Affairs or his or her equivalent is an essential requirement in order to validate the credential of the Kyrgyz Republic. It appears that Central Asian countries are encountering similar problems with other Conventions. The Credentials Committee requests the Secretary General to explore before COP10 options to resolve this situation with the Parties concerned.”

4. The Secretariat is exploring with the secretariats of its sister environmental conventions whether they have encountered a similar difficulty, and if so whether a solution has been found. The Secretariat will advise further on this matter following SC37, particularly in the event that this might need a further amendment to the Rules of Procedure.