

Agenda item 8

## Contracting Parties that are consistently in arrears in their payments to the Convention

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the present status of arrears in Parties' contributions.

1. In Resolution X.12 (2008), the Conference of the Contracting Parties “URGES Contracting Parties in arrears in their payments of assessed contributions to make a renewed effort to settle them as expeditiously as possible to enhance the financial sustainability of the Convention through contributions by all Contracting Parties, and AGREES that the Standing Committee at its 40th meeting should further consider options for dealing with Parties that are consistently in arrears with payments to the Convention.”
2. At the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (SC34, 2006), the Secretariat presented a number of opportunities to improve the support given by the Secretariat to members, including: producing timely and easily readable statements of contributions, including all unpaid portions, for Contracting Parties in arrears; requesting Parties that are in arrears with their contributions to settle them by the established deadlines; and requesting Parties experiencing difficulties in meeting their financial contributions to propose a plan to provide for the payment of contributions in arrears within a limited period. In assisting Contracting Parties to develop such a plan, the Chair of the Standing Committee, the Standing Committee regional representatives, and the Secretary General should make contacts, through diplomatic channels, with those Parties having arrears to plan settlement of their outstanding contributions.
3. These steps have all been taken, with mixed results. During 2009 we have received previously overdue contributions from the following countries:

Gambia, Honduras, Islamic Republic of Iran, Mauritius, Mongolia, Montenegro, Paraguay, Serbia and United Arab Emirates.

However, a number of Contracting Parties remain in arrears, with a consistent core of Parties that have never paid their contributions. A schedule of these is attached.

5. Options have been suggested to reduce the flow and priority of services provided by the Secretariat to Parties with arrears. For example, the Standing Committee could advise the Secretariat to manage requests from Contracting Parties with arrears in the following ways:
  - by not processing further Small Grants Fund (SGF) proposals;
  - by providing Secretariat advice and missions (including Ramsar Advisory Missions) only in emergency situations;

- by providing delegate support to attend regional and COP meetings only if all other Parties have been assisted according to existing rules, and in any event only if the Contracting Party is not more than three years in arrears.
6. Finally, there exists the option that Contracting Parties more than three years in arrears could be made ineligible to vote in the Convention's meetings, ineligible for election to the Standing Committee, and ineligible to make nominations for membership of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP).
  7. However, all of these possibilities seek to provide essentially punitive measures and would inevitably restrict the Secretariat in assisting all Parties to fully implement their Convention commitments. The Secretary General does not recommend that course of action.
  8. As agreed at SC40, the Secretariat will continue to apply a mixture of awareness-raising and counseling as its principal mechanisms and hopes that these will be sufficient to help the situation continue to improve.
  9. The Secretariat would however like to request that all Standing Committee members, especially those on the Subgroup on Finance, note the Contracting Parties in their regions that have long overdue contributions, particularly those that have never paid since acceding to the Convention, and strongly encourage these Contracting Parties to begin to address their arrears.

**Membership receivables, 2009 and prior, outstanding as at 17 March 2010, together with last payment year**

Annual Voluntary				Annual				
Region		contributions	contributions	Last year paid	Region		contributions	Last year paid
		CHF	CHF				CHF	
Africa	LIBYAN ARAB JAMAH	18,725	0	2004	Asia	UZBEKISTAN	5,930	2004
Africa	NIGERIA	16,645	0	-	Asia	LEBANON	4,372	2008
Africa	GUINEA	11,215	1,000	-	Asia	IRAN, ISLAMIC REP	3,656	2009
Africa	MALI	11,454	1,000	-	Asia	BAHRAIN	2,752	2008
Africa	GUINEA BISSAU	11,367	1,000	-	Asia	PAKISTAN	2,523	2008
Africa	MAURITANIA	11,577	1,000	-	Asia	PHILIPPINES	2,064	2009
Africa	CHAD	11,367	1,000	-	Asia	IRAQ REPUBLIC OF	2,000	-
Africa	CONGO, DEM. REP.	10,846	1,000	-	Asia	YEMEN	2,000	-
Africa	COMOROS	10,694	1,000	-	Asia	MYANMAR	1,000	2008
Africa	SIERRA LEONE	9,000	1,000	-				
Africa	BURKINA FASO	7,968	1,000	-			<u>26,297</u>	
Africa	CONGO	7,774	1,000	2002				
Africa	BURUNDI	7,000	1,000	-	Europe	IRELAND	19,029	2008
Africa	DJIBOUTI	7,000	1,000	-	Europe	PORTUGAL	14,131	2009
Africa	TOGO	6,000	1,000	2003	Europe	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	6,038	2009
Africa	LIBERIA	6,000	1,000	-	Europe	ITALY	4,644	2009
Africa	COTE D'IVOIRE	4,723	1,000	2005	Europe	CROATIA	2,703	2008
Africa	SENEGAL	4,031	1,000	2005	Europe	MALTA	1,000	2008
Africa	SUDAN	4,000	1,000	-				
Africa	CAPE VERDE	4,000	1,000	-			<u>47,545</u>	
Africa	EQUATORIAL GUINEA	3,000	1,000	2006				
Africa	SAO TOME & PRINCIPE	3,000	1,000	-	Americas	MEXICO	92,513	2008
Africa	NIGER	2,192	1,000	2008	Neotropics	ARGENTINA	13,898	2008
Africa	MALAWI	2,000	1,000	2007	Neotropics	VENEZUELA	15,859	2008
Africa	CENTRAL AFRICAN REP	2,000	1,000	2007	Neotropics	PERU	16,599	2005
Africa	TUNISIA	1,316	684	2009	Neotropics	CUBA	4,578	2007
Africa	CAMEROON	1,097	1,000	2008	Neotropics	COSTA RICA	2,195	2008
Africa	ZAMBIA	1,000	1,000	2008	Neotropics	GUATEMALA	2,819	2007
Africa	BENIN	1,000	1,000	2008	Neotropics	HONDURAS	2,254	2007
Africa	LESOTHO	1,000	1,000	2008	Neotropics	SURINAME	1,000	2008
					Neotropics	PARAGUAY	8,438	2008
		<u>198,991</u>	<u>27,684</u>		Neotropics	BAHAMAS	1,000	2008
					Neotropics	NICARAGUA	9,810	2000
					Neotropics	JAMAICA	1,000	2008
					Neotropics	BELIZE	3,000	2006
					Neotropics	SAINT LUCIA	7,000	-
					Neotropics	ANTIGUA & BARBUDA	4,000	-
							<u>185,963</u>	
GRAND TOTAL		<u>480,001</u>			Oceania	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	10,205	1998
					Oceania	PALAU	7,000	-
					Oceania	MARSHALL ISLANDS	4,000	2005
							<u>21,205</u>	

Key
- No payment since acceding to convention