

Revised arrangements for the 2022 Expert Discussions on preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Vienna, 14 – 16 February 2022

Non-Paper by the Secretariat

A. Background

On 7 March 2021, the Congress adopted by consensus the Kyoto Declaration, calling upon the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to adopt the appropriate policy and operational measures for the follow-up to the declaration and to identify innovative ways to make use of information on progress made in the implementation of the declaration. The Commission approved the Kyoto Declaration during its thirtieth session in May 2021. Operative paragraph 87 of the Kyoto declaration refers to the commitment of Member States to adopt effective measures to prevent and combat crimes that affect the environment, such as illicit trafficking in wildlife, including, inter alia, flora and fauna as protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, in timber and timber products, in hazardous wastes and other wastes and in precious metals, stones and other minerals, as well as, inter alia, poaching.

During the thirtieth session, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted the resolution, entitled “*Preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment*”, and recommended it, through the Economic and Social Council, for adoption by the General Assembly. The resolution welcomed the Kyoto Declaration, reaffirmed the central role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as the main policymaking body of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, and reiterated the call made in the Kyoto Declaration to adopt the appropriate policy and operational measures for the follow-up to the Declaration. Operative paragraph 15 of the resolution called upon the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to hold, during the intersessional period, **expert discussions on preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment to discuss concrete ways to improve strategies and responses to effectively prevent and combat these crimes and to strengthen international cooperation at the operational level on this matter**, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources. The aim of the expert discussions is not to address the different crimes that affect the environment in a comprehensive manner, but to raise awareness for the bigger picture and the elements highlighted in the resolution as well as to bring together the relevant stakeholders to share their expertise, with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as the convening forum for dialogue.

Information on the meeting can be found on the dedicated website:

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/31_Session_2022/ccpcj-thematic-discussions_crimes-that-affect-environment.html

B. Proposed Structure

It is proposed to hold **three days of expert discussions** under the auspices of the Commission **in the Vienna International Centre Vienna from 14 - 16 February 2022**.

- a) 14 February 2022 – Expert session 1 – Preventing crimes that affect the environment
- b) 15 February 2022 – Expert session 2 – Combating crimes that affect the environment
- c) 16 February 2022 – Expert session 3 – Strengthening international cooperation at the operational level to address crime that affect the environment.

C. Format and organization of work

The expert discussions will be organized in a hybrid format (in-person participation combined with virtual participation) in the Board-Room C, fourth floor of the Vienna International Centre, and online on the RSI platform Interprefy with simultaneous interpretation into the official languages. The Secretariat will ensure that panellists and speakers in the interactive discussion can make their interventions online, should they not be able to participate in person.

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Extrabudgetary resources have been provided for the interpretation of the expert discussions into the six official languages of the United Nations. The morning meeting will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Vienna time), and the afternoon meetings from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Statements of panellists should be no longer than 5 minutes, statements during the interactive discussions should be no longer than 3 minutes.

The expert discussions are informal meetings, which will, to the extent possible be held in line with established practice, and in accordance with the applicable rules of procedure.

The meetings will be webcast on the website of the Expert Discussions:

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/31_Session_2022/ccpcj-thematic-discussions_crimes-that-affect-environment.html

Introductory statements

In line with the format of the thematic discussions for the follow-up to the Kyoto Declaration and based on the experiences gained with the organization of the thematic discussions held by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs since 2016, each day of the expert discussions will start with introductory presentations by UNODC and/or other entities highlighted in the resolution¹.

Panel discussion

After the introductory presentations, the meeting will continue with a panel discussion with five experts per panel to be nominated by the Regional Groups (one per Regional Group per expert session, three in total, through the Chairs of the Regional Groups), experts from other relevant United Nations entities and specialized agencies, and other entities³, one panellist from Institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network (PNI), and one expert to be nominated from civil society through the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in cooperation with the UNODC Civil Society Unit.

Interactive debate

Following the interventions by the panel, the floor will be opened for interventions. During the interactive discussion those delegates participating in person can raise their flag to indicate their wish to speak. Participants joining the meeting online can indicate in the meetings chat if they wish to intervene.

Background Note

A **background note by the Secretariat** has been prepared to facilitate dialogue and active exchange during the Commission's expert discussions. The background paper is structured along the three main themes under discussion, with a view to providing food for thought regarding elements participants could address during the respective sessions. The background paper also includes for each of these three themes a set of discussion questions.

The background note was shared via special message with Permanent Missions on 21 December 2021, and has been posted on the website of the meeting:

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/31_Session_2022/ccpcj-thematic-discussions_crimes-that-affect-environment.html

^{1,3} the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the World Customs Organization, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the World Bank, the secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and other relevant international and regional organizations – including those that are members of the inter-agency partnerships mentioned in the resolution, namely the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime and the Green Customs Initiative

In-person participation

All in-person participants in the meeting room are required to keep a distance of 2 meters to others, wear an FFP2 mask at all times except when taking the floor and adhere to all access requirements as contained in the COVID guidelines for participants that will be published on the webpage of the meeting². For the Expert Discussions, all in-person participants must be able to show proof of a valid PCR test not older than 48 hours, even if they are vaccinated or recovered.

Due to COVID-requirements the number of seats in the room is limited and as such only one representative per delegation can participate in person in the meeting room at a given time. All others are requested to participate online. Depending on developments in the host-country the number of in-person participants might have to be revisited closer to the meeting.

D. Outcome

The expert discussions aim to facilitate the exchange among experts and interested stakeholders of experiences made, challenges faced, lessons learnt, and good practices developed in the implementation of the policy commitments regarding crimes that affect the environment, thereby contributing to the practical implementation of the commitments made in the Kyoto Declaration.

The outcome of the expert discussions will be a short Chair's summary, not subject to negotiations, which will be brought to the attention of the Commission at the next regular session of the CCPCJ in May 2022, under the agenda item addressing the follow-up to the Kyoto Declaration.

² https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/31_Session_2022/ccpcj-thematic-discussions_crimes-that-affect-environment.html